

CINEMA Papers

Registered by Australia Post — publication no. YPP 2121

JANUARY 1989
ISSUE 87
\$4.50*

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WITH
LOVE

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DIRECTORS TALK

Eduardo, Miller, Jarmusch

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Published by CINEMA Publishing Pty Ltd
1990 by Australian Film Commission
and Film Victoria, Melbourne VIC 3000
Printed by Finsbury Offset Printers

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No 67, January 1990

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Cinema Papers is published with financial assistance from the
**AUSTRALIAN FILM
COMMISSION**
and **FILM VICTORIA**.

Letters Of A Dead Man

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KEITH GOW

The obituary of Keith Gow in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in November described him as a "comedian with a conscience". He died on 2 November 1987 aged 68. His life death is to recall a unique life's work and a deeply significant contribution to Australian documentary.

Keith contributed to the making of more than 30 Australian films — among the documentaries were many dramatic works. His prolific output as writer, director and editor was evident from the 34 films he compiled in his last six years at *Film Australia* prior to his retirement. One, *The Women Of Uluru*, which received standing ovations at the Moscow Film Festival in 1985, was controversially broadcast on SBS on 10 November, the night of his funeral in Sydney.

He'll be remembered curiously for his dry good humour and his determination. Some will recall his incredible recovery after he was hit by a light aircraft which suddenly dipped during take-off as he was filming at an airshow in New Guinea.

Others will remember him from his time at *Canberra*, the *Amputee Film Unit*, or as screen cameraman and director at *Film Australia*. Everyone who knew him will remember the foregrounding of a social perspective and those who have worked with him remember in particular the co-operative spirit which ran through his life and work.

During his career at *Film Australia* he contributed directly to such notable trials which ran through much for the Trade Union Trilogy Authority (TUTA), which the film on the introduction of welfare, *Now You're Talking*, in the *Film Australia series on Australian cinema history*, is probably better known in general audiences.

Of particular significance for filmmakers of the future, and for the labour movement too, was Keith's role in the establishment and development of the *Workers' Workers' Federation* (WWF). *Film Unit* during the height of the cold war, when particular Australian filmmakers and writers were blacklisted here as effectively as they were in the US. Keith's work was on when art could not be shown, as he put it, "We were protected by a strong, militant trade union."

He helped set up the film unit inside the WWF following the establishment of a *Workers' Industrial Theatre* and the production of a 16mm trailer to promote its first production.

During the late 1960s he was recruited to take hand-welded film by Bob Mathews when they made *They Came To Stay*. During this period he,



KEITH GOW At work at *Film Australia* with Margaret Heath (centre) and John Whitewell (seated, right).

like many others, was influenced by an "apparitional" cinema from Eastern Europe, described as an eager public through the new film medium which sought to provide an alternative to the commercial American cinema. Friends recall Keith studying their film frames by frame, one by one, seeking out "what is true that makes them work."

In the mid-1970s Keith, with Noreen Dulah, made the beautifully evocative short film, *The Forever Luring*, commemorating the *Sydney* *campaign against the death sentence imposed on Judas and Edie* Rosenberg in the US.

The classic body of trade union work, which began with *Porters For Veterans* and includes *Holiday Miles*, *There's A Crowd*, *Heroes Of Coal* and other trade union films, will be remembered for a clear commitment to the causes of working people and a vigorous and moving style.

Controversy frequently surrounded projects on which he was involved; he didn't often polled responses to political interference and censorship which sought to silence his work.

After retiring from *Film Australia* a couple of years ago he kept on working. As the time of his death he was engaged on a film history of the *Workers' Workers' Federation*.

His work represents someone who was too easily forgotten. There is a generation of committed Australian documentary which precedes that of the 1970s. Keith Gow was a filmmaker who continued to work through thick and thin, with a commitment to social change and a firm grasp on his documentary method. We are in debt to his experience.

John Maggs

■ *AFF Distribution Limited* has begun actively marketing the Australian Film, Television & Radio School's student films. The AFF has a license for all AFFS student productions, but all of the "student", first-released films have been set aside for special presentation in *Collection Titles*.

■ The winners of our Warren Beatty competition, who will receive a copy of the *Essential Threepenny Biographies*, *Warren Beatty: A Life And A Story*, courtesy of Holtzmann, are: C.W. Lee, P. West, M.C. Amos, Martin Ryan, Gordon Craig and Michael Tracy. The film in which Beatty appeared with Sean Penn was, of course, *Jihad*, directed by Robert Rossen.

■ The series of articles on glamour will now appear in the March issue.

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FROM RUSSIA WITH GLASNOST

Soviet films like *Letters Of A Dead Man* and *Repentance* are being hailed as examples of a new cinema of glasnost. IRENE ULMAN looks at the themes that are emerging in recent Soviet cinema, in particular the epic *Repentance*, a prizewinner at the 1987 Cannes Film Festival.

In the changing climate in the Soviet Union, cinema has been rapidly acquiring an unprecedented role. The realisation that repressed speech is a major source of subversion has opened up possibilities of expression that stunned the Soviet Union. Russian critics have claimed that cinema turned out to be better prepared for change than any other sphere of the arts. If cinema is indeed the vanguard of the social and cultural change in the country it's partly because it is, in a sense, the voice of glamour. The etymological root of *glasnost* (glas) means voice. Cinema speaks to millions.

Some films have only recently come off the shelf after years of oblivion. Among them are *Repentance* (directed by Tenghai Abusulan in 1983), *My Friend Ivan Lazhechkin* (Aleksei Gherman, 1983) and *The Throne* (Gleb Pavlov, 1979). The release of these films coincides with the moment when people are coming to terms with their problematic history, and grappling with such concepts as individual, consciousness and guilt. In this atmosphere *Repentance* has acquired the status of a modern epic.

In a television interview Gleb Pavlov has said that there's always a possibility that glamour might fail. Although hope and enthusiasm abound, some directors who have experienced strict repression will take a while to believe that they can make films without fear.

Pavlov's *Throne* self-consciously breaks into forbidden ground. A successful playwright faces the fact that none of his writing has been sincere; that his subjects serve to glorify fictional heroes and are of no importance in real life. He searches for a core theme but is unable to go beyond the "fant" of unopened myth-making. The "problem" subjects, a man impotting to breed, is introduced sketchily. The gradual build-up of detail in a nice rendering of a taboo (self-consciousness and artistic allusions are something hard to damage).

The conscious preoccupation with themes is reflected in

Foolish (directed by Vladimir Vassiliev and Boris Yevstahiev, 1985) which opened the Soviet film festival in Australia in May 1985. The central character is a prima ballerina (Tchekhovna Maximova), a symbol of the institutionalised world of classical dance. Her dream is to dance in a new ballet based on Mikhail Bulgakov's *Moskva And Margarita*. As an excautious racing an administrator comments wryly on the ballet: "Yes, but what about the theme?" Films like *The Throne* and *Foolish* register a strong point: a change of colour and a disturbance of convention have become possible. Action may be imbued with personal meaning and officially uttered truths may be open to personal interpretation.

Aleks Gherman's *My Friend Ivan Lazhechkin* is a highly personal view of life in the 1930s. Partly based on a short story by Yury Gherman, the director's father, it is a nostalgic depiction of Russia before the crimes of Stalin's purges of 1937. But if Gherman the father wrote his stories in the spirit of optimism and belief in the Bright Future, Gherman the son has the knowledge of history which is superimposed on the original perspective of the story.

Ivan Lazhechkin, the mapmajor of criminal police, vows to clean up the country and plant gardens for all to enjoy. His determination is characteristic of the society that cultivates patriotic enthusiasm. But we know that Lazhechkin's professional zeal and unscrupulous misuse of power for the good of the country are a pretence to a reign of terror.

The Russian scholar Dmitry Likhachev (who has proclaimed that repentance is the dominant force of change in Russia today) said that no individual can be altogether innocent of what went on during Stalin's rule. The people in the film are ignorant of the "greater history". But in the 1980s Gherman cannot make Lazhechkin's party credible without moving the action back a few years.



This small poetic iconoc lastly underscores the moral void that confronts a director who may simply want to make an autobiographical film. To Gherman the 1990s represent his childhood. But the act of bringing together history and personal memory can turn a tribute to the people he loves into an accusation.

Lapshin is a lovingly fought document. Gherman looks for the essence of the period and finds it in his own memories: an small accident, an background dialogue, snippets of conversation. Music, mostly marches, represents the spine of the film. The film is in black and white, except for the opening and closing moments, where the narrator's voice reminds us that what we're seeing is a memory: the arrow we are looking at through the window comes in another temporal dimension.

There is no defined narrative, the most important thing to Gherman is atmosphere and characterization. Ivan Lapshin himself is a fine illustration of human complexity, eluding definition. The camera follows him like an eye. The character is probably the boy (Gherman's autobiographical self) and the viewer's link with the present; who lives side by side with Lapshin is a character too. A peculiar feeling of intimacy develops between the viewer and Lapshin. Lapshin may not be liked, but there is a sense of a deeper understanding of the man and his time.

When Gherman was asked whether he would consider making a film about the present, his answer was: "I would first have to make sure that contemporary problems can be talked about out loud."

Gherman's film about the thirties is in some respects strikingly similar to Vadim Abdrashov's *Plumbum, Or The Dangerous Glass* (1990). Plumbum is an example of a new kind of direction which is reflected in its clearly defined narrative. It does not look to the past in order to comment on the present. It is set in today's Russia. The hero, or rather the anti-hero, is a 14-year-old schoolboy who possesses exceptional qualities: a decent enthusiasm to rid the country of vagabonds, delinquents and petty criminals, as well as a peculiar physical condition. He feels no pain. His name is Rudolf Chukov (the creative name to the Russian ear). Rudolf sounds like Romeo. Chukov has something to do with both sensitivity and virgility. The nickname he has thought up for himself is Plumbum (lead), the metal. He proves so useful to the criminal police that they set him in their cleanup campaigns.

It's a fine line between life and play and between role-playing and real drama. In a scene bordering on grim comedy (many scenes do) Rudolf catches his father doing a bit of smuggling as a hobby, and files a statement on him. The father tells the boy that power combined with moral consistency is dangerous (the only overt moral statement in the film), and Plumbum does nothing and imagines — and unexpectedly.

The film is well-paced, the plot is tight but the message is elusive. Rudolf's heroic features can be both appealing and repellent. Mostly they're unpredictable. By making the audience question its emotional response to the boy's enigma while intellectually acknowledging that he is a moral cripple, Abdrashov forces us to discover ourselves a soft spot for a charismatic monster.

Letter Of A Dead Man, Konstantin Lopushansky's first film (1990), has probably the most chances of addressing the Western audience directly, without having to break through a number of cultural and historical barriers. It goes right beyond the problems of power and generation. History has come to an end in the aftermath of a nuclear disaster, but an elderly scientist (living in an underground shelter with his dying wife and a group of colleagues) writes letters to his son whom he



REPORTANCE Katerina Ababkova and Esther Geigle

* knows to be dead, trying to pretend touchingly and absurdly that life is going on.

The film contains world views and philosophies while depicting various reactions to the catastrophe. It has the clarity of an anthology of human thought. At this final stage of civilization science and religion meet as the professor claims he is close to finding the scientific formulae that can save the world. He is brilliantly played by actor and director Roman Bykov, who has a strong resemblance to Elstaz. When everyone is moved to the "central bunker" where there is a chance to stay alive longer, the professor chooses to remain behind with a group of orphaned children who have been left out of the general evacuation. Whether his theory of survival through hope is not clear. But just before dying he tells the children to go out of the bunker into the open and to keep on walking, no matter what. The last unforgettable image shows the children walking in a single file through the postcard snowstorm, holding on to each other.

Lopushansky was Tarkovsky's assured director in *Stalker*, but while Lutkin echoes Tarkovsky's films, it has its own style. Its medium is not dreams but science fiction. The co-writer of the script is Irena Strugatsky

who has written popular science fiction together with her brother Arkady Strugatsky (*Tarkovsky's* screenwriter in *Stalker*). Tarkovsky used black and white dream sequences as images of apocalyptic premonitions; Lutkin is totally enveloped in these gloomy washed out tones. Destruction is no longer a mere theme. But in spite of this, the children's dance of death in the end is also entirely devoid of hope.

REPENTANCE

Repentance has been lauded as an exposé of Stalinism, but director Tengiz Abuladze's preoccupation with a phenomenon called "Varlamism" goes far beyond one particular personality cult. Stalin was exposed once before, but was subsequently buried in a hermetically sealed box, while the amputee modelled in his image continued to exist. In *Repentance*, a woman strips over the body of the tsarist Varlam Asanidze who had killed her parents, along with masses of people, many years before. In court she claims that Varlam will return alive until he is exhumed. Her words seem absurd only because she does not spell out the obvious. But an incomplete sentence is all it takes to create a metaphor.

For Abuladze, metaphor and reality are not that different. The preposterous sight of a dictator's corpse turning up in front of his family mansion belongs in the realm of the absurd. But the act of dismemberment is based on a real event, as is the story of a woman who lost her family in Stalin's purge and later earned her living by baking cakes. Knowing this makes it easier to see that *Repentance* reveals documented reality in a poetic form. If it seems obscure, it is so only because as poetry it.

The film opens as the woman, Katsavon Barashvili, lowingly adds finishing touches to one of her cakes made in the shape of a church. A visor uniformer that Varlam, head of the city, a grain trader and a man of goodness, has died. She looks at the black-edited newspaper photo; the camera moves in on it and we see now looking at the dead man lying in state, surrounded by flowers and a company of mourners. The opening provides a kind of frame: we will return to the cake-filled room. The action mostly takes place in court where Katsavon is tried, but in fact we are carried away by a flashback as she begins to narrate the story of her popular crime. The story is about a dairymaid who likes playing games: one of them is her cat and mouse game with Sogor Barashvili, an amer lobbying to preserve the town's 16th century church.

The opposition between Varlam and Sandro is established in a fleet of cinematic storytelling. There is a cheerful street scene, reminiscent of Polanski's small-town carnivals. There is a burning effigy; candlesticks stand around, a march is playing. A mustachioed demagogue is making an enthusiastic speech, but isn't too intelligible sound; Varlam has not yet made his mark and his words are unimportant. What's much more fun to watch is the battle between a couple of ploughmen and a broken pipe which in showering everyone present with water. Umbrellas open, but the effect of rain just adds to the festive animation. The camera freely moves from one detail of the scene to another, until a small even takes place.

Facing the spectacle in the street a young girl blows soap bubbles from an open window. It's the eight-year-old Katsavon Barashvili. Her parents join her. Her father firmly shuts the window. The three remain there, but the afficion has now escaped Varlam. His spectacles are aglow as he looks in their direction. The glance will follow the Barashvili like a curse.

Abuladze's images invite strong reactions. Sandro is unquestionably a Christ figure. As a painter he represents tradition in the form of both religion and art. He also p-

REPORTANCE Anatoli Moshkovets



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LETTERS OF A DEAD MAN (Rainer Bölkov, 1988)

stands for integrity. In a sense, by refusing to dance to Varlam's tune he sacrifices both himself and the church he is trying to save. Kostrov's wooden churches are a reminder that human constructions, even sacred ones, are less important than spiritual integrity. Obviously, in Tarkovsky's Sacrifice a little boy makes a present for his father: a small replica of their house. The next day his father destroys the real house. Is it because he doesn't want his son to inherit the compromises he has had to make?

On the other side of the spectrum, Varlam stands for the death of the individual and culture. He recognizes only the king of beauty that stretches on in a straight line, refusing to acknowledge the ancient symbols that provide humanity with constant points of reference.

Abladze makes full use of these symbols. He blends history and myth, which does not mean that he mystifies. His use of universally recognized signs has the effect of defusing archetypes stripped of particular historical specificity. In this way he exposes the myth that there exists a qualitative difference between one dictatorship and another. In many ways *Repentance* is similar to some South American films, particularly in its tendency towards the surreal. It's not just a question of satire, which is a form of criticism. It's a more subversive kind of laughter. As a Soviet critic put it, it's a question of polarization. Repentance has to match the scale of the thing it opposes; yet one of the weapons it uses is a peasant joke (and the poker's weapon is a simple spade).

This carnivalesque freedom of expression applies to Abladze's generous use of symbolism. We must not forget that all these things were excluded from the Soviet worldview for a long time. The system was supposed to be complete in itself, an ideological border marking the boundaries of possibility. Abladze does in film what Mikhail Bulgakov did in literature, revealing other points of reference and other worlds. Usually this was done only in the guise of children's literature or science fiction.

Similarly, Abladze invokes images from other films. There are glimpses of Chaplin's *Great Dictator*, Fellini's frequent presence (in the circus most prominent, among other things). In one scene, the dying Varlam wants to shoot the sun because, he says, "when it rises I bleed to death". He then falls asleep on bare ground dressed in a mask, an archetypal dementia king. One thinks of both Lear and Kurosawa at the same time.

The numerous references do not diminish the originality of the film. For the Western audience, especially, it offers the additional pleasure of recognition.

The film is so visually striking that the often clear moral overtones never become the primary concern. One of the most memorable sequences is Nina Barsoeva's dream. She and Sandro are running, followed by Varlam in an open car, his armed escort coming from all directions. They run through abandoned streets, through long flooded corridors and out into an open field. Then they stop, bound in earth up to their necks. Varlam is there too. Standing in the car, his black uniformed figure cut against the pale blue sky, he looks down on them and then suddenly, with perfectly cruel timing, he breaks into a berserk, Varlam aria. Nina wakes up to a reality that is an extension of her nightmare. Dreams are not merely made in sleep.

In Kostrov's story Varlam looms large as the central figure of evil. But when the flashback is over and we are back in the courtroom, we realize that Varlam himself is no longer the man. He has passed the legacy of his cruelties on to his son Abel and his unsuspecting grandson, and what's at stake is whether they accept or reject it.

In Tarkovsky's *Sacrifice*, a boy runs throughout the film says, "In the beginning was the word. Why is this, god?" His father is not there to answer. If he were, all he may be able to communicate is his enormous confusion and an undefined sense of guilt. It appears that the older generation has committed some kind of sin and is no longer eligible to teach the young. In *Repentance* too, some expect their fathers. Is that not the ultimate violation of natural order? But in both *Sacrifice* and *Repentance* the violation has a cathartic function: it liberates.

The film ends with a question mark that complicates the moral fable, making it soberingly real in the Soviet context. It encapsulates the moment where change is on the verge of being broken. But in the end, Abladze refuses to point out a direction. He chooses the static structure of an allegorical dream where fantasy is used to extend the possibilities of the real. The position Abladze settles on is also a recurrent image in *Repentance*: an open window, belying the past or onto other dimensions.

Repentance ends with the image of an open window in Varlam Street with a view onto the winding road that used to lead to a church. The question is, where does it lead to now?

REPENTANCE: Nino Matvila



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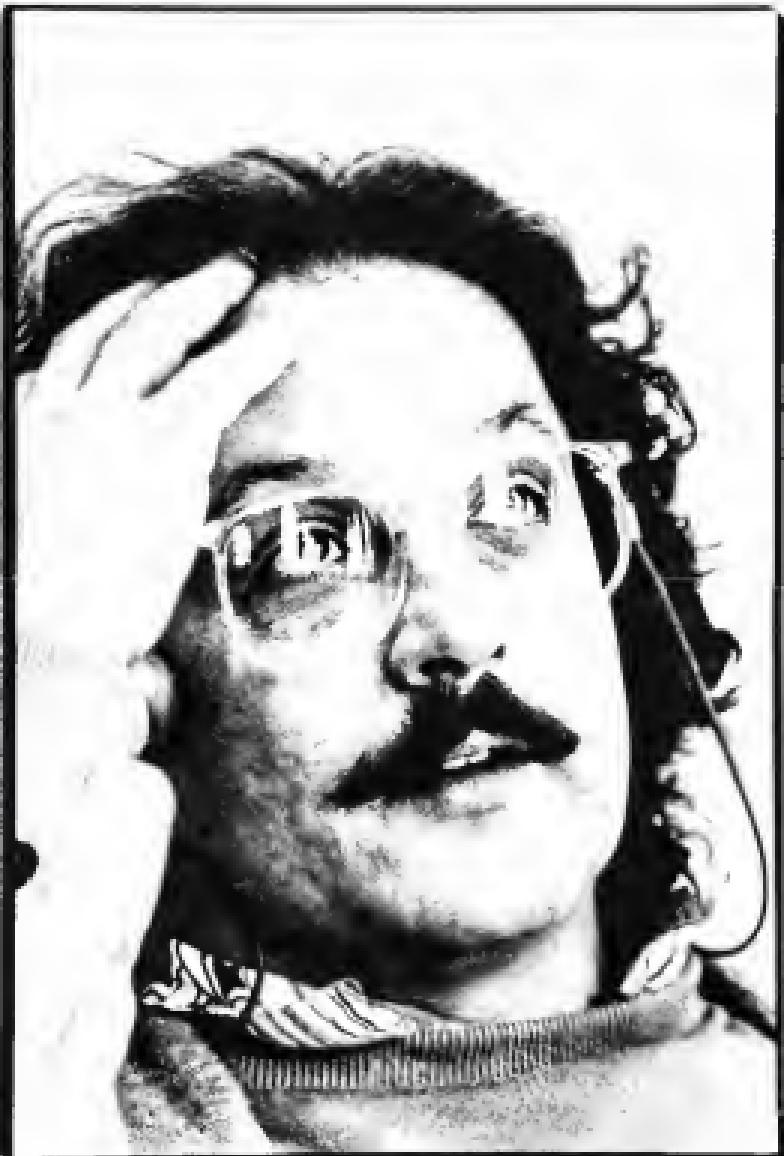


Photo: L. M. Kitashita

MILLER'S TALE

GEORGE MILLER IS AS ELOQUENT
IN CONVERSATION AS HE IS ON FILM.
HE TALKS TO TOM RYAN.

George Miller speaks energetically about his films, even if he'd prefer to remain silent on the subject. "I truly hate doing interviews, especially the them ones. You never have time to think seriously about the questions or your answers and, as a result, you find yourself saying things you don't really mean at all. And, besides, a movie finally isn't an intellectual process. It's the variety of emotional levels on which it's working that have to really matter to you. And there I don't think that you're dealing with the rational. I know that's anti-critic, because critics rely on being able to explain things. But it's the emotion that's really in control and many critics can't touch that part of it."

Of primary importance to Miller is that his audience should be swept along by the kinetic flow of his images and by the story that emerges from them. "Right from the start, even going back beyond the planning of *Mad Max*, I've been in love with the actual plastic form of film. For me, the great master of film was Buster Keaton, and through him I've learned that film can be like visual music. He only had the silent medium, but he understood how images could be manipulated. And so, when we came to *Mad Max*, the first thing that Bryan Kennedy and I wanted to do was a chase film. We got a lot from action comedies like *Bring Up Baby* and *What's Up, Doc?* but Keaton was the major source of inspiration for us."

Miller's feature films to date — *Mad Max* (1979), *Mad Max 2* (1981), the fourth segment of *Twilight Zone — The Movie*, called "Nightmare at 20,000 Fathoms" (1983), *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* (1985), co-directed with George Ogilvie, and *The Witches Of Eastwick* (1987) — all explode with the violent sequences of their making and their market. Their roots can be found in the slapstick tradition, but their visual form grows from the kind of filmmaking that has become known as "exploitation." All of them, in varying degrees, conjure up disparate circumstances that challenge the security and the sanity of their male protagonists, driving them to the edge of madness and sometimes beyond. The worlds that the films create are certainly larger than life, but the drama they offer centre upon a question that transports their "fantastic" qualities back to the everyday: on what terms can I survive to see tomorrow?

The films have won wide critical admiration and popular endorsement, but there are some who have been less than enthusiastic about their success. Philip Adams, Max Harris and a number of others have taken Miller's films to task for what they perceive as meanness and mindlessness, discovering a failure of taste and morality instead of a joyous plunge into the realms of the comic strip. Perhaps this is inevitable, given the way in which the films refuse to distance themselves from the frenetic excitement of the action that is either visible or, as is more often the case, felt in them.

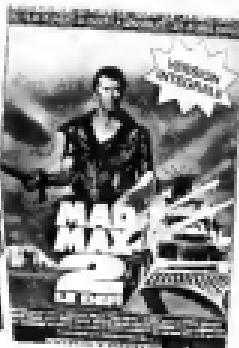
Miller's response to the critics is surprisingly restrained: "I'm not naive enough to think that, if you have fairly confronting material, it's not going to produce a mixed response. I was, in fact, surprised how, in Japan and Europe, and particularly in France, the 'Mad Max' films acquired something of the status of high art. We had less lofty ambitions, but that the films have attained some official approval is nice. *

• Of course, there are always going to be people who'll see the film simply as exploitation, in the kind of film that maybe shouldn't be made. On my wall at home, I have a review of *Mad Max* by an Indian critic who says, "The perpetrators of this film should be taken out into the street and hung."

This review clearly caught Miller's attention, but he is more interested in the kind of analysis of his work that goes beyond what he sees as "the primary level": "When you prepare a film, you talk about its ideas. You feel your intuition. Then, occasionally, someone comes along and shifts the load of conversation you had in the planning of the film. It's happened to me a number of times. It's like someone has had access to your dreams. The French critics are good at this and their work on the last two *Mad Max* films has been really inspiring. I read a review of *Witness* in *The Globe And Mail* in Toronto and they seemed to get onto it too."

But *The Witness Of Judgment* has also inspired the divided response to Miller's films. An occasionally comey Gary Van Hove has replicated the *Mad Max* and the hard-hat crowd in his New England interview with *Entertainment Weekly*, but questions of taste and excess continue to limit much of the discussion of Miller's films. And, indeed, Miller considers that the elaborate special effects do run the risk of overbalancing the more interesting aspects of *The Witness Of Judgment*: "They became my bigger headache. As the studio got more nervous about what we were doing — and it can understand their reservations — they kept giving us more and more money for special effects. And I confess that I was a bit of a sucker. I largely took the hard hat and had some wonderful fun and, suddenly, I realized I had a battle on my hands, that this shouldn't flesh up a special effects movie. And so I had to fight to cut out as much of them as I could. I would love to have been able to cut out more, because I didn't think they relevant. ... When we had the first cut screening, I knew that the studio expected the audience to enjoy all the silly bits and love the action stuff, but the review happened just before they showed me, to a degree, at my hands to eliminate the effects they were concerned."

Miller does not, however, include the unnecessary cherry-vanishing episode amongst the effects that he fought to remove: "That was something I wanted to do and it was there from the start. And, certainly, it was dangerous ground. One of the things that you try to do at cinema, as drama. From literature, is to take your audience into the experience that your characters, the characters, are going through. It's like my fight director theory of the cinema: for the audience, it's like sitting down and being swept along on some sort of ride like a roller coaster. When you're dealing with vomiting, though, you're applying with a very acute physiological reflex. It can be induced simply by watching someone else do it and there's a knowing of protection: how an audience is going to respond. People have different thresholds for that sort of thing. In fact, we had more vomiting in the movie, but very quickly we saw that it was being rejected. So we toned it down. But it is important to the kind of excess which is part of the human condition."



MAD MAX FINANCE French posters for the first two *Mad Max* movies

one on which she didn't sit. It was agreed to be screened. John Williams' *Star Wars* music actually arrived as we ate a late meal. And since, as a narrative obligation, we had to get rid of the *Future* character, I thought it was an interesting and logical way to do it. I guess it's easier to do on a *Monty Python* kind of comment."

Yet, despite the film's exposure to the extensive "festive" procedures that have always dominated Hollywood's pitches to its audience, Miller remained uncertain of the kind of response that it would receive on its release: "We didn't think of it as a monolithic summer American movie ... except that it has Paul Michaelson, Chey, and an embarrassingly large budget which I stopped counting at \$8 million, none of which was about the hotel. But it did come out in the summer and it has been successful. I think that maybe the audience is getting more sophisticated as we Italy boomers are getting older and it's fed up with the little junk it's been getting for so long. *Witness* is essentially an adult film and the younger audience I got surprised me because I think that the Americans have very little sense of irony. In fact, that terrified both me and the writer, Michael Crichton. We have a much more developed sense of irony in Australia, even if some of the local excesses caused that aspect of the film. They are it from the Warner people now. They knew it was supposed to be funny, but they wanted it to be like *The Exorcist* or *Aliens*."

Nevertheless, it could be said that what is interesting about *The Exorcist* and *Aliens* is not the general effect on the family dynamics that are being played-out through them and which are responsible for the place both film occupy in contemporary mythology. In the same way, it can also be said that what is striking in *The Witness Of Judgment* is not to be found in its surface. "When I found compelling about Michael's screenplay was the endorsement, the unambiguous material. In preparing the film, we went to Geoffrey Russell Birney, a professor of history at the University of California in Santa Barbara. He's a medievalist who's written four volumes on how the devil has appeared in various cultures. We went back to the pre-Christian era where, every winter, the cult of Pan肆pate would visit the Minotaur Goddess. He was always a bison god, even though he was a bull-mother. His problem was that he was a manipulative and sadistic sexual predator, destroying his wading love at the same time as he was a territorial god. But I disengaged everything, and then, almost on their whim, the Minotaur Goddess would visit her pony. When he was given the spring would come and his god would give flowers. As Christianity emerged and became very male-dominated, at the same time as it needed to suppress the Minotaur Goddess, it also turned that myth, this sexual imagery, into a figure of great terror. They made him eat a date liqueur with beans and onions for. Later, especially during the French Revolution, a lot of heretics and some of the libertines transformed the Christian devil, Satan, into a kind of cultural hero, an anti-monarchist. And thus, in resistance grew to the fire and brimstone kind of Jesus that surrounded him, because that foppish figure of God with the moustache and the robe. It was Fanfan's help with this kind of background that led us to revise this righteously dev.

"We made a very conscious decision to rein in the kind of devil they had in *The Exorcist* and to mould him on the Pan figure."



WHICH WITCH HAS THE TONE? Michelle Pfeiffer, Chey and Sean Connery

Miller's fascinations with mythology and with the passing down of stories from generation to generation and one who has lost her mother. In *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*, it is closest to the surface of the film as Max is rescued from the moral darkness by the tribe of his children. Through their stories, they teach him of the continuity of the life cycle, of the way we come to hope for the future is embodied in these stories of their past. "Every night we do the tell no-nominees who we were and where we came from."

The film, which ends with the epiphany "...to Reiner", is best about which Miller remains passionate. "Of the three 'Mad Max' films, I love it the most. It's flawed, but it's much richer in ideas than the others. We went to over flowing with ideas at the time. But we almost had two more. The best separator, I think, is the ones around the child to babies. With them, we were really conscious of the different tools on which we were working. We were attempting to really push it out there, and that's why it looks so much."

But there's also the technical decision-making that was important to Miller. "Even though we shot the film as Coopie Pedy, we had originally planned to use the Olgas. We had a terrific location manager, George Moonee, who went out and picked the Aboriginal elders there. Through a translator, he told them the story of the film and they got very excited. Many of our original storyboarding models were adapted to some of the ideas in their culture. For me, that's also a very exciting and I wish I'd been there to prove what people like Joseph Campbell knew — those things are lurking at our collective unconscious, everywhere, at every culture."

Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome seems to bring the 'Mad Max' cycle to an end, and, even though Miller is leaving his aquatic capes, it is hard to see another 'Mad Max' film going anywhere but backwards. "I used to have spent my life making 'Mad Max' pictures. After the first one, for a long time I never wanted to consider another one because it had been such a definitive experience. But I did feel *Mad Max 2* became an attempt to do it right, while *Thunderdome* was an attempt to do something completely different from it and it with the love, warmth, disengaged character as the only connecting theme. I think that whilst we were consciously dropping it and for the character I should add that we never saw ourselves making

it again and I see the film as more of a trilogy than anything else. I had endless discussions with Terry Gilliam and George Ogilvie and even with Mel about Max dying at the end of *Thunderdome*. Interestingly enough, it didn't quite fit the story. But, in a way, he does the whole big part in the story changes, when he loses his parents, and, even with him still alive, the story somehow seems finished. Still, that was our feeling after we did the second one. And I suppose that if we came up with something that was really exciting, that was different from the other three, and if we could get the creative juices flowing again, we'd do a fourth. But there are so many different directions we could take at the moment that I don't see it happening."

One of these directions found him producing and then working on the promotion for the October release of *John Dillinger: The Poor Boy Gangster*. The film was made for the Sydney-based Komedy Miller production company formed by Miller and Bryan Kennedy in 1988. It gathered five AFI awards just prior to its release, despite the Screen Producers Association claim that it should have been excluded from competition because it was made as a television. Miller is disappointed by what he sees as an unnecessary controversy, even of the stars never really got out of the sweep. "It's true that we approached John's screenplay as part of a package of four films that were doing as a 'Touring of Australian Films' for the 10 Network for the Bicentenary." But, from the outset, it also recommended itself very much as a feature film. "We decided to shoot it in 35mm, rather than 16mm and came to an arrangement with Equity and the actors that, if it worked out, it would get theatrical distribution."

He's also concerned to set the record straight about his involvement in the film. "For one, it was simply a matter of saying no John, 'Oh, yes That's terrific,' and letting him go off with a wonderful crew to spend five or six weeks in Hollywood. What they came back with is something that I wish I'd done, and, finally, I care about it more than I do *The Whales Of*..."

*The nominees for the prestigious *Cinesmart* awards are: *Cinesmart* — written by Ross Camerton; *Almond Milkhouse* and *Sally Hugo*, directed by Ross Camerton; *The Hills Of The Sun*, written by Tony Maguire, directed by Chris Meier; *The Damned Peer Story*, written and directed by John Dillinger.

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• **Burkett** But I'm embarrassed by the suggestion that I had anything significant to do with it because I didn't — unless you count looking at values as important. What I do know, though, is that art is the kind of product that is representative of Kennedy Miller, of the sorts of things we do."

It's clear that his partnership with Terry Hayes and Doug Mitchell at Kennedy Miller is not just something he does to pass the time when he's not working in Hollywood. "It's the ideal filmmaking situation where you work in a truly collaborative way. Doug's background is in business and he's usually involved at that end of the process. He's set up a comment system and that means that we can get the most immediate feedback and refined information about our production's progress. (But even though I do never sit down with Doug, I can contact him very step of the way). And Terry does just about everything. I think that, in the end, it's a mistake for anyone to become expert at one thing to the exclusion of the others. You become unable to appreciate the broad richness of a process. The strength mainly distinguishes American Filmmaking from American studio filmmaking and that I'd like to think distinguishes Kennedy Miller, is that we're all multi-disciplined filmmakers."

Miller, in fact, feels he's in Kennedy Miller a liberation from the hard traps of directorship. "It's much easier performing. Sometimes, I've had a writer or a director who's happened, (through you) one can also get extremely involved. On Paul Mazursky's film, *Seven Cities*, I helped out and had a story line doing some second unit work. It's a wonderful life, second unit — you have a small guerrilla crew of people who really pride themselves on doing that sort of box and you have time to put all those terrific shots. And the funny thing is that you feel yourself over-covering in order to please the director, knowing she's every word by her side and desperately needing her approval."

But Hollywood, on the other hand, has not been a particularly happy experience for Miller, even though he recognises that he's learned from it. "It's essentially a specialised bureaucracy there. It's a very fragmented, clumsy machine. That's not a game approach. I think that's why, by and large, the most interesting films made in America in the last decade or so are always independent, or at least made outside this mass amateur Hollywood. Unless someone is an extraordinarily brilliant executive, like a Thelma, the kind who only chooses material very rarely, they're just not big enough or brilliant enough to handle the process. I think that, now, the studios would prefer not to make films, though they love distributing them. That gives them some measure of fiscal control. Production is very mysterious and terrifying to them and that's why they exist in very safe ways sometimes."

Miller recalls that he approached *The Whistler Of Eastwick* like an innocent. "I went from *Twilight Zone*, which was completely cold-blooded, horrific fire and very cerebral and open because of Spielberg and the people he has around him, to *Whistler* and its producers and unopen studio executives who knew little more than fragments of the process. It was almost shocking, in fact, to find how broke they were. And it all became very political, which makes the fun out of filmmaking. The way in that both films were for the same studio, Warner Bros. The major difference, of course, was the producer's name. In order to get what you need, you have to split the difference, as they say. You can't be collaborative. The major effort has to be given to America in order to fall into the skin of the material, impersonal level. I remember Jack Pidgeon took me by the hand and said, 'You've got to hold them in contempt, George, or they won't respect you.' It's a very common expression: Roger Donaldson and after *All My Sons*, 'You know, they mistake pretension for weakness, and if you try to be collaborative it upsets the balance.' The only way to cope in is to be a real bastard. I've seen that applies in most bureaucracies, but it's not a way to make films. Filmmaking has to be rough, otherwise you're not doing it right. But it's a damn' mania that can't have no collaboration and dignity."

It was something off/about the Hollywood problem during the *Whistler* sound mix, and Jerry Stahlford, a wonderful sound editor who worked on most of Frelinghuysen's films, said, "We can tell that your man doesn't respect your filmmaking." He told her that Frelinghuysen's colleagues got to the point where he took on film assignments simply to score "fame" and "dazzle" himself in the process."

"It's certainly no pricing that Miller is full of admiration for those who've

been able to make their way successfully through the maze. "The film makes a who can work the system are those who moved off to the film schools, especially those of the unaffiliated kind, like the Committee. When you worked for Roger Corman, you had to do everything, literally everything. One of the most ingenuous filmmakers I've met in America is Jon Devoe. He worked on *Twilight Zone*, *Astrophysics*, *Robot Cop* ... He moved off in publicity for Corman and learned his way along to become one of the great hands-on-like producers. He's truly a filmmaker, as distinct from being simply a director or a producer or an executive producer or any of the various kinds who always seem to happen to a film. Maybe he can't change the system any more than David Puttnam could — it changes only by dint of economic forces — but he knows how to use it to his advantage."

But Devoe's not the only one who's won respect from Miller for the way he's been able to survive the Hollywood nightmare. Jack Nicholson stands out for him, not only as the one who succeeded on the set of *The Whistler Of Eastwick* when the going got tough — Miller, in his benign way, discreetly avoids saying much about the reported tensions between him and Devoe — but also as a deeply committed filmmaker. "He sees his job to get top the film made. You know, sometimes he was one of the biggest egomaniacs I've had in my life because I did him a hellacious favor once. I expected an average, flabby-sounding, brilliant actor, dragged on the pink, futuristic, and basically a frivolous man. It was striking how much he was the opposite. He is very fascinating, but when struck, he was like an iron statue. He has a steel wisdom and life is anything but freedom for him. Below the skin of him, there's this 'You better make a decision about what life's about and what your place is in it' about him. He considers the adventure, informs his work. And, unlike many, it has consequences, as he gets older, he gains more focus and precision. There's no egoism at all. He's a gift for a director to work with, such a wonderful acting machine. He equates his working methods most closely with those of the actors — there's all that sort of training for the moment of the event where there's nothing but the performance, where everything is forgotten and you 'let it be', where you become entirely free, open, naked. He understands that this can only be gained by all the hard work that comes before, and when he succeeds it never by accident. He star can always win what Great Leagues, the champion American drivers, call 'the sweet spot', isn't it? what Leagues see in the red champion, the one who can just miss the spot, but who's able to recover and come the same close in a perfect performance?"

The opportunity to work with people like Nicholson will take Miller back into the mainstream again. The depth of what he could be involved in is beyond the scope of this film. But, somewhat unexpectedly for one so moved by the possibilities of what you can do on the big screen, Miller is constrictive about television. "Before I started work on *The Damned*, I was one of those who passionately, naively minded people. If you really wanted to be serious, you had to do feature films. But what I discovered was that television, far off in certain dimensions, is what the most interesting art and the *Something Like Max Headroom*, which was an American ABC prime-time network television experiment, makes the point. Even through it failed, at least they tried. It's rare to find a feature film doing things like that. But because it's so competitive on television, they've forced us to make it interesting. You talk in network executives in the States, and they'll say, 'We don't want these bickering shows, they're so something tedious and new.' You talk to the studio people and they say, 'Oh, it's a bit dangerous to make a feature film like that now. Give us the hackneyed idea, the safer basis.' And if you look at American series and telefilms, at least and recently, you'll see that they've focused just about every social attention to choices that you can think of. 'This' isn't television has been spared by shows like *Hill Street Blues* and *St Elsewhere*. It's often very informative and sometimes very powerful and it's successful on prime-time. But no-one on earth would go to see a movie like *Damned*. *Alone* *Alone* on a Saturday night, unless it had something else in it. I took Ted Danson from *Cheers* and made him a child molester. In my view at least, television needs itself in the kind of work and to the kind of documentary expansion that goes with it, though there should be no limit and that rules. Movie-making seems to be different in scale; more limited in family. Film is the light simulation in the dark, publicizing culture, and television is more like a window through which you watch another world from your safe home environment. And while the form is more exciting in the cinema, and even though you can't write your audience into an all-consuming expansion on television, the one subject matter that's more interesting, it's like trying over your neighbour's fence to another life."

With a forthcoming release is written by Terry Hayes and is based on Charles Williams' novel of the same name, which was the source for Oscar-nominated *Wings Of The Dove*.



In the early 1970s Dennis Hopper co-wrote and directed a "spectacular failure" called *The Last Movie*. "The thought was," he said in a recent interview, "to deliberately alienate the audience, tell them they're idiots when they're watching a movie. Every time I got drawn involved in the movie as a story, I'd come back and say, 'Ha Ha Ha. You're only watching a movie.'"

While *The Last Movie* died the death of many a radical venture, Hopper survived, picking up some 16 years later right where he left off. And to judge by his recent success, the time is finally ripe for black humour and audience alienation, for self-conscious, non-committal filmmaking.

But not everyone likes the kind of movies with which Hopper is associated, movies which are frankly decadent, not in the lascivious manner of Ken

JOHN DUIGAN'S MORAL TALES

Russell, but in a gritty, post-apocalyptic, dismally American way. To some people's way of thinking, the glorification of Fock and Fank, or the best of American neo-gothic, is just plain ugly, not to mention mean. John Duigan, whose second film, *The Year My Voice Broke*, cleaned up at the AFI awards, is too with serious doubts about the "sheer sexual excess" of some of the year's most controversial films.

"It's pushed to the point where they're thumbing their nose at an audience's moral response to the material," he tells me. "They're saying, 'If you start judging this material, if you feel squeamish about it or awkward in the face of it, that's your problem.' I'm thinking of a film like *River's Edge* and also *Blue Velvet*, but particularly *River's Edge*."

River's Edge, like *The Year My Voice Broke*, is a film —

John Duigan's *The Year My Voice Broke* took out the major honours at the 1987 AFI Awards.
CHRISTINA THOMPSON talked to him about nostalgia, adolescence and amorality.

✓ shear adolescence — but then the resemblance ends. In all other respects the two films could not be more dissimilar, and Dugan makes no secret of his belief that the amorality of *River's Edge* is more akin to immaturity.

"It appears, on the surface, that it's easier to make a critique of American society, or certain aspects of American society, saying, 'it's not like this, it's totally mixed, people can feel nothing in value at all.' But then it seems to me to depict from that and that is where in this perception," he says.

"I think that there are some very unpleasant aspects of that film, like the way the camera seems constantly to return and linger over the body of the dead girl. And there is very definitely that sense that the filmmakers draw logic when there is any possibility of warmth between some of the characters. This suggests to me an extremely cynical and almost despairing view of the world."

Robert McFadden is filmmaker. John Dugan did a Master's degree in philosophy at Melbourne University. Not particularly interested in the philosophy department's strong anti-logical position, he altered the design of the course to allow his own students to comprehend philosophy and, above all, ethics. His preoccupation with the latter is, he concedes, evident in his films.



Robert McFadden

In a 1981 interview Dugan said of *Mosch To Afshan*, "I sincerely hope people will perceive the optimism which is crucial to the film. I wanted to generate a lot of warmth between the characters." He was trying, he said, "to create a fairly wide-spectrum audience in the experience of their sympathetic characters."¹¹ Now years, five movies and a numerous list, those words describe quite accurately what Dugan is up to in *The Year My Father Died*.

Thirteen-year-old Dugan (Mark Taylor) is in love with 18-year-old Freya (Lorraine Coxman). But Freya is in love with 16-year-old Trevor (Ben Mendelsohn). Danny and Freya have been friends since childhood and she, sympathetic to the helplessness of his infatuation, tries to knock him back gently. Trevor, for his part, has a latent natural inclination to defeat the underdog and, despite the rough go, basically, he's not incapable of sympathy for the underdog.

Like the plot, the "relationship drama" is archetypal. "On the one hand you've got the character of Danny who's this external observer of the world, who sits on the fence, who is alienated at school because he's different. He likes poetry, he speaks about hypnosis and identity, and all these sort of things, but he's a very central character," explains Dugan.

"And on the other extreme there's Trevor who's much more dynamic, spontaneous, wild (heavily) who has his hands around and doesn't think about what he's doing potentially or analyse it at all." Finally, he concludes, is "somewhere between the two, finding both men interesting for completely different reasons, for their personality having certain similarities in both and separating them again."

The story, set in the early 1960s, has all the ingredients of a classic

teenage tragedy: adolescent dreams squelched by authority in the form of parents and police, all against the backdrop of a nervy, narrow-minded country town. I asked Dugan if he didn't think *The Year My Father Died* had no place in film with a whole slew of American films from East Of Eden and *Asterix Without A Caesar* to *The Last Picture Show*.

"I wasn't consciously trying of operating in an American style or genre today. I've always felt that my films were closer to European styles of films than American. And in terms of the pairing of a film like this, and in its more gentle characteristics, it seems to me to be dissimilar to American films that probably have a more strident edge to them."

Dugan hasn't got much time for films that are either "stolid" in tone or "hypnotic" in motivation. He does not believe in poking fun at his audience, nor in subjecting them to an all out assault on their basic humanist values, however corrupted those values may be. Because the fact of the matter is that these are values Dugan shares; that he thinks are those of a liberal humanist.

In more ways, Dugan is a traditionalist. Good and Bad in *The Year My Father Died* fall out in familiar camps. On the one hand there is honesty, clarity, strength of character, and on the other, vanity, cynicism, meanness or weakness of spirit. The Good is associated with individuality, the Bad with the massness of the pack.

To highlight the opposition, each of the individuals is cast as an Oracle: Danny's philosopher, Trevor's nihilist, and Freya's dubious parentage and unconvincing behaviour, play radical them beyond the pale. Adolescence as an experiential factor is crucial for Dugan as it does for, say, David Lynch, but it is something you suffer, not something you suffer.

Dugan sees he wanted to examine how people who have not been tainted into society perceive the world. "Because I think that they perceive both the industry of which they are on the fringes, and also the world in general quite differently. I think there is a place in which the characters that Mark and Trevor play have preserved elements of their childhood longer than most people do. That gives them a sort of health and, in a contrary way, replacement or complicity in the way that they perceive things that people whose heads are filled with the multi-various aspects of our culture lose."

"Last, I think there are sections of our heads that go to sleep as we become obsessed with the manufactured elements of reality, so for them, they have what could be described as an almost mystical relationship with their world, in particular with the Land, the self, and the human being, and so forth. And this aspect was a very strong moving-off point for me, that sort of our reality is so far away real."

I think it would be fair to point again to describe Dugan as a romantic, though not perhaps, in the field of Australian filmmaking, quite as incongruous a romantic as Peter Weir. From some points of view, however, romanticism is utterly inappropriate to the world in which we live. This tends to the perception of some independent American filmmakers who may be driven to de-commission and renounce the money-hungry Hollywood's increasingly hysterical and vulgar commercial myth-making.

Romanticism is characterized by a preoccupation with intimacy as opposed to social and physical reality, by nostalgia and a tendency to sentimental, shared, as over the horizon, anywhere you have and care at the internal world. Certainly *The Year My Father Died* fits the bill. Narrated in the past tense by a grown-up Danny, it has strong elements of the other worldly.

One of the film's major characters is a frenzied dwelling mystic-words who lives in a shack by the railroad line. Joseph (Bruce Spence) functions as a kind of spiritual adviser to the troubled kids, telling them strange stories about the way in which recent record the events which happened to them, about how shadows or echoes of human emotions are imprinted on the physical world forever, and about how, if you are sensitive, you can feel these imprints of the past. "The poems of love that are expressed by Jesus," says Dugan, "were probably quite eccentric. I, in fact, prefer many of them."

There's been a lot of talk about a malaise in recent Australian film to locate the subject away from hard-hitting contemporary realities. *Crossed Ties*, the soft-focus companion for this year's *Best Film*, has been appreciated particularly for its head-on confrontation with a topical issue in America, of course, few enough people would even consider the kind of criticism Jesus' critics in America are likely to have when you might call "social consciousness". One exception might be, ironically, *River's Edge*, the film Dugan finds fails to live up to its promise in this regard.

But moral accountability is something Australian actors and critics seem quite comfortable with, and Douglas is no exception. These "you *guilty/damn* characters" in *Mouth To Mouth*, for instance, were in Douglas's words, "characters whom the middle-class audience generally root about in numbers in the unemployment figures, or look in the juvenile courts."

The *Year My Voice Broke* is, comparatively, rather light on social commentary, possibly as a function of its spatial and temporal setting. I asked Douglas how he might feel about the charge that his film was nostalgic and therefore critical only about social realities that were safely distanced from most people's experience of life:

"To me the temporal setting of the picture is largely irrelevant. I wanted to make a film that had the first person character looking back and trying to make sense of a very important formative relationship. I simply chose that period because it was the period I grew up in so I have it well and was able to observe the correct kind of language and I know the music of the time and so forth.

"But really, as far as I'm concerned most of what it's about is transmissible to now or any recent time. And I don't think the developed sophistication that you described in the society we're now about in all. So, if people are critical of the film on that level, to my mind they have completely missed what the film is about."

And as for the choice of a country setting, Douglas says, "I've made a number of films about urban subjects and the Australian rural reality is just as valid a part of the Australian experience. But this, again, I don't particularly think that who goes on to the society is especially a rural situation. It's in the nature of a character's past because it's a memory in themselves. But it has a lot in common with urban realities as well."

Douglas would, in the end, have it both ways. On the one hand it comes from the material, sociological, historical and economic world into a magic world of longing childhood and mythical adolescent fantasy. And on the other, an acknowledgement that the desire for such a return (and the glamour associated with it) is a product of the very social realities it depicts. In this sense, *The Year My Voice Broke* is very much a movie about adolescence, perhaps rather precociously, not only between youth and maturity, but between the romantic and realistic challenges which are associated with those different stages.

Douglas was an singularly unimpressed with the overseas question, however, that I prompted me to ask what he thought about Australian film criticism in general. It had overflown him the night before in conversation with a couple of journalists articulating the position that, all in all, it was a pretty shallow business.

"I think that one of the things film industry suffers from is that it's indelicately among intellectual circles in Australia can be blantly unengaged at Australian films, and possibly lump them all together and wrig them off. I personally think that there are very few writers who give the same kind of attention or dispensing in their analysis of Australian films that they would give to films by people with more or sounding names from Germany or France," he says.

John Douglas is a very serious fellow. Hopkins remarks that I am, I have great sympathy for the reason which you in *The Year My Voice Broke*. But I confess to surprise at his high mounted and rather puritanical response to what seems to me one of the most interesting recent developments in film.

I am reminded, however, of a similar debate between André Zola and André Tricarico. Zola, the father of Naturalism, was told by many of his contemporaries to have an "infernal" mind. His choice in poetry only the world aspects of life, he was told, as life. When La Terre was published in 1887 Tricarico responded with the following review:

There is in all of us, on the heart as well as the brain, an instinct for beauty. M. Zola does not realize this . . . In the world there are some beautiful forms and noble thoughts, as well as pure souls and heroic hearts. Let us take away and retain that . . . He does not seem to know that not the coarse things in life which please us, nor the philosophical theory can be both subjects and guides. As for common decency, it can impose only one of two things: a learned education or vice. M. Zola is worthy of our profound pity. Douglas's position are the exact opposite in case without precision. May the debate rage ever on.

1. Dennis Hooper interviewed by Ron Pownall, *Realty Fair*, July 1987.
2. John Douglas interviewed by Scott Murray, *Cinema Papers* 11, April-June 1979, pp.202-203, p.207.



Mark Taylor



MONGREL DREAMER MARK MORDUE TALKS TO JIM JARMUSCH

ASPHALT JUNGLE JIM

Jarmusch is the guy who comes in the party until his shot sounds out. He's gonna do great. He's got all this Francis Ford coming out under his hat. He's very young, funny like Buster Keaton. It's like *Love Story*. You have to say no pleasure — I think it's an important movie on American comedy and they don't realize. Deep and dark. It's like saying it's a dead zone with a glass of water in front of you — not out at you waiting there like most acting is today!

— Tom Waits (G magazine, October 1988)

A 34, Jim Jarmusch's vision of a "sad and beautiful world" sees him firmly at the forefront of a new dreamscape for a more measured American cinema, a dreamscape rediscovering new ways of storytelling, new forms, attitudes and reflections, that provide relief from the market-bound strategies of the mainstream where the popular imagination has been captured and atomised by functionaries of power and success.

Broad generalisations of a New American Cinema, though, are perhaps too neat an ingegue's rallying call, but the scattered signs of life are inevitably encouraging. Away from the *Top Gun*, *Rambo* and *Rocky*, the American superhero and his cinema of doubt, questions and, now, even examples of a kind, sees a political shakings-up of vision being given, at the very least, a chance.

This is the significance of various stories like *Blow Out*, *Skin Graft* and *Dream By Day*. Jarmusch's importance in this canon is that while he is not an overtly political as Spike Lee, he is equally as operatic and grounded in the process of struggle, and through he lacks David Lynch's disturbing meta-mythologised grasp, his fury, power, if you like, sense of fantasy is not without its own subtly ironic gestures. It's also gifted with the charm of a reluctant faith in humanity that establishes where Lynch's problems lie.

Jarmusch is a director with a promise: a promise born out of re-examining the world through a battered humanism that draws new strength from old stories reshaped into a truly contemporary form. And in recharming the poignancy of storytelling, of history, he takes on the metonymy of art cinema and in more futile deconstructive exercises, opting to reconstruct a language that, with the usual art spacklings, is missing, under which so much European and European-influenced filmmaking appears to be collapsing. A process mirrored, coincidentally, in *Wings Of Desire*, the work of one of his major influences, Wim Wenders.

In this sense it's no surprise that Jarmusch's latest effort, *Dream By Day*, should open in a graveyard,

film that one way of describing and analysing and reading another manipulating the audience in the process, mistakes us, and without the morally judicious alternative of course — Jim Jarmusch, *Some Notes On Strange This Finale* (1988).

cruising through the banks of New Orleans where a failed DJ called Zack (Tom Waits) and an egotistical going-with definitions of grandeur called Jack (John Lurie) prepare for the big break that will serve as their final stamp against fortune. Some 100 minutes later they're free not only from prison, but from the seductiveness masculinity and massed immigration that had brought them so inexplicably to failure's door. Liberated both physically and spiritually by the larger sense of innocence, love and faith of an angelic (again the *Wenders* quiddity) Italian tourist called Roberto (Roberto Benigni), a happy ending is discovered as they walk off into the sunset light, a straight track to ecstasy that recognises an essential human spaciousness which need not deny itself the consequences of experience fellow men can potentially provide.

If that all sounds weirdly idealistic and wet, don't be misled. Jarmusch's deadpan humour and world-weary nobility are sharp enough to avoid the luxury-music pitfalls of letting dreams deny the disparities and ambiguities of a harsher, lived-in world. What he really does is create a fairy-tale for adults, a hip night-time hybrid of *The Three Stooges*, *On The Road* and *Alice In Wonderland* that wryly comments on modern 'awareness'.

Jarmusch's story begins in Akron, Ohio, an industrial area in the Mid West, heartland of American drama and relatively homogeneous white middle-class aspirations (one and the same thing?). Deviating from the mean, in his artistic ambitions, Jarmusch originally wanted to become a writer.

Travelling in Europe in the early seventies, particularly his hower exposure to film through Henri Langlois' Cinémathèque in Paris, the largest film archive in the world, changed this irrevocably, his viewing慷慨捐赠者 an increasingly observational form. After he returned to New York in 1975 he applied to the NYU Graduate Film School, submitting only writing and photographs, and was accepted without having made a film of any kind.

At that time Lello Benedek (director of *The Wild One*) was director of the school, and he in turn introduced Jarmusch in his third and final year to ▶

Nicholas Ray. Jarmusch became Ray's teaching assistant, a formative period of influence powerfully marked by the fact that Ray was dying of cancer.

Ray's last film, *Lightning Over Water* (Mark's Mind), was a collaboration with his closest adviser, Wim Wenders. Wenders brought his own European crew. Ray brought Jarmusch. Two days after Ray died in June, 1998, Jarmusch started on his first film, *Frontier Psychiatrist*, a 100-minute effort made in 10 days for about \$15,000.

Described by one critical crew as "a plaintive portrait of a marriage crusher, half-pissed drunk, mean, half Lower East Side wise-person", it was eventually sold to German television and then resurrected in Jarmusch's studio, even if he had blown his trainee master to complete it and would never give her degree. The German studio would also help him with his work on *Stranger Than Paradise*.

The German connection took on a more personal level with the friendship of Wim Wenders and his producer Claus Scherzer (Jarmusch's new producer Otto Grossberger is Munich-based, and was not daring enough to keep the project running, who gave Jarmusch his two-film deal from *The Eyes Of Thieves* which allowed him to make the opening sequence of *Stranger Than Paradise*. Neither Wenders nor Scherzer were prepared to go any further than that as they were booked and supporting the making of a Christa Wolf film and getting back to Paris. Tom.

Enter Paul Huster (director of *Disneyland Land Is The Land*, *Destry 1935*), who liked what he saw of the incomplete *Stranger* at a film festival and took Jarmusch another \$15,000 interest-free in order to keep things rolling. Shot in 18 days and edited in two weeks over a two-year period for a total cost of \$135,000, the full-length *Stranger Than Paradise* took the Camera D'Or at Cannes in 1984, the most coveted prize in the world for a first feature film. Jim Jarmusch had arrived.

Before this he'd worked on such projects as Eric Marthell's *Blitzkrieg USA* (1980) and Howard Brookner's documentary *Armageddon* (1982), as a sound recordist (the latter virtually a two-man project for much of its duration). He'd also passed through the highly frantic New York scene of the late 1970s, experiencing it first-hand and becoming friends with some of the icons of the era like Patti Smith, Television, Blondie and Talking Heads, as well as filmmakers like Eric Marshall, Brian Gorham, James Kavaz, Charles Adams, Bush Board Scott II, and Aronofsky (whose film *The Fountain* he will reprise as "important for the space of the time"). Much later, after the success of *Stranger Than Paradise* he would connect again with Talking Heads to make the video for "The Lady Don't Mind".

Requited, however, by "the whole concept of rock videos" he has not bothered exploring that field. The "MTV disease" of rapid-fire editing, with its advertising consciousness and frenzied sense of time and place, is completely at odds with Jarmusch's sense of style and politics, which implicitly repeat the culture of speed and the voraciousness of consumerism for a more reflective context. Apathy from the more obvious European continental influences in the past of his filmmaking — slow and measured — there's also a gentleness and sense of human spirit suggested by Japanese influences at some secondary level. More specifically, the wide-angle camerawork of Yasujiro Ozu, admired by both Jarmusch and cinematographer Robbie Müller, is clearly apparent in the compositions of both *Death By Love* and *Stranger Than Paradise*, where viewers are given the opportunity to choose what they want to examine, often taking on the whole cause or scene with a gradual sense of its staggered-silence richness, rather than being bombarded by close-ups. In that way Jarmusch's black-and-white vision arrives at a photographic stillness, a distillation of scenes through the sequencing of one moment unfolding into another.

It's this unbarred style that takes a little getting used to, but the way with Jarmusch's always-waiting *In Dreams* (he's made it tell us in a downbeat space for freedom and even melancholy, the myth of American dreams, that use Willie (John Lurie), Eddie (Richard Edson) and Eva (Sister Lucia) but no realize their common bond till circumstances had scattered them). *In Dreams* by law Jarmusch allows his characters to depart from each other after the resolution. And in both *Death* and *Stranger* gazing fantasy with reality's lack, showing us stories of people who discover themselves through expert casting a star of story.

What was it about Robbie Müller's style that made you want to use him for *Death By Love*? Well, I'm a big fan of Robbie's work. I don't think, though, that he necessarily has a signature. In other words, he's worked with Wim Wenders, he's worked with Peter Bergman (in *The All-Laughed*), he's worked with Peter Lorre (in *The Country Is Cane*), he's worked with Hans Christian Andersen (*The Golden Child*), as well as many other people. Barbara Schreiber (*A Question Of Class*, Peter Huisman (*The Left-Handed Woman*)) — it's difficult to explain.

He doesn't really light from the outside to the eyes of people. He doesn't think of trying to light the characters at a dramatic moment or low. His lights exceed, in a way, below what he interprets the emotional content of a scene to be, discussing it with me — which I found rare and interesting. I learnt a lot from him. In America, the tendency has been, especially from Hollywood photographers — at least in my



THESE MEN IN A BOAT Tom Waits, John Lurie and Roberto Benigni get the

fashable in the last 10 years — to pin-sharp design and softness and mass everything. A kind of backing away from the sharpness of the lens, which I never understood at all. Robbie's unsharp is the opposite to that, I think.

Did you discuss making *Death By Love* in black-and-white with him, and what is it that attracts you in using it? No, I decided on that as I was writing the script. As for the situation, I think there are some people like Woody Allen, for example, or Scorsese, who make an excellent film in black-and-white and the rest in colour. I'd probably like to do the reverse. I'm pinching my nose myself — that is in colour and

the other in black and white. So for me it's a consideration of how I tell the story in my mind when I'm writing it.

I think black-and-white is very interesting and very absorbent by being minimal and having less information. It reminds like people of my generation and younger grew up seeing渭南 footage on television, so we associate colour with today. Whereas now older people associate black-and-white with a kind of reality. But for me it's not so realistic.

And there's that whole period of colour film now in the last decade that's very surrealistic. That's a style I love. Not so much, but to get lost in.

You're in Berlin at the moment. Have you found the environment there helpful for what you're writing? Well yeah. But the film's not in this place here. I just came to get out of New York for a while. Berlin's a strange city because

writing backwards, starting off with little details, impressions or characterisation, and that the story grows out of them, rather than starting off with the story first. Yeah. The story is, in a way, secondary to me. And the characters are more important. And the atmosphere. Then the story suggests itself, the playing out of all the details I've selected. It's then I tell the story, as opposed to telling the story, then filling in all the details.

From having seen *Stranger Than Paradise* and *Down By Law*, it seems to me that process is reflected in what happens to the characters too. It's like they experience a whole lot of events, small details and more significant ones, and by the end they've come to a story of their own that seems more sensible to me. Maybe that's just objective, but it seems more like life. I don't see life as a very structured, big dramatic story — it's more a collection of events that you interpret, depending on chance and your emotional state.

You don't seem to deal with existentially tormented figures so much as people who accept, perhaps fatalistically, what's happening around them.

Yeah... but that gets complicated. You can find instances of existential thought in these kinds of characters. But at the same time I think of my films as comedies — they're not comedies I'm interested in the sense of humour and emotional qualities of the characters, rather than the conceptual thinking which turned out to be very favourable in the names of the last seven.

Unfortunately that notion of existential distance has also become a tool of reaction. It's led to a kind of ugly fascism.

Well, I'm very cynical anyway. And I think we have pretty much destroyed this planet, and I don't really understand a certain solutions have been offered throughout history — and thinking — and they've not been able to be applied. So I'm at the point of cynicism where I think the one small things which happen between people are very beautiful — the very special things that happen on this planet. And if we experience them as humans, at least we're still here to experience. But in general I don't have a lot of respect for the way governments have treated this planet, my own country in particular.

In light of your success and added pressure or threat from major film groups to come over to their side, how do you feel about that whole politics of film?

Well I've certainly changed since *Stranger Than Paradise* in that I'm not ideal in the position of making a film, so that film was a lot of money. What I'm interested in is doing my own work, not working with someone else. And therefore it seems like the best way for me to approach is to produce my own stuff, which is how I plan it to be for my next film, with my partner Chris Czakowski — that I have another film planned after the next one which may require a bigger budget — not big by American standards, but maybe £3 million.

With that film, I plan to leave. I keep my options open. But what I will not do is subject to some producer who should be financing an audience factory telling me how to cut my film or who to cast for it. I'm not about to compromise that stuff. I'd rather be a microscopic independent than make some kind of film I don't believe in or feel good about.

At the same time I do want to reach some kind of audience, even though I don't think about the audience very much when developing the films. I do still get a lot of interest, and there are a lot of possibilities for production, but I'm not ready to compromise to those people and that ends a lot of possibilities immediately. They say they're interested but I don't really trust them.

What you say 'they', you're obviously talking about Hollywood?

I'm talking about people who think of films as packages, and therefore want to control how the package is put together.

How alive, then, do you think the American underground, left-field, low-budget cinema is at the moment?

Well I don't think underground film isn't anymore. If they do



using feeling

it's really just an island in the middle of East Germany. We're not on the border of West Germany, we're just East Germany is a walled-in city — it's a strange atmosphere. But New York is also a kind of island, and it doesn't really have anything to do with America. I don't know... I love New York, it's my home, but I just needed to get away from the mass entertainment. I like living in other cultures too because you encounter new things and somehow it helps your imagination. I wrote *Down By Law* when I was in Rome.

I was curious about your work process for scripts. You've said in the past that, to an extent, you almost approached

cost it's on the Super 8 format, and therefore underground by definition because they can't be shown in the conventional channels. The more underground it is, the more you're not independent, unless you're independently wealthy and produce films with your money — which is not in their right mind's done. So you're not independent financially.

I don't really know what the movie is I mean, I have interesting directors like Steven Spielberg make a fairly large budget film and I don't see that has been his style or what she wants to do. So it depends on how people want to work. Spike Lee has just made a new film for Columbia Pictures. I know he was in vogue and formerly considered as an underground director. Sure for *Alex Cox*.

So I don't really know of any underground "stars". I just hope those so-called underground filmmakers want to protect their own ideas and are able to make films any way they can, even in the studios. As long as their ideas are protected. We're as an interesting stage right now in that regard — we can see what happened to Spike Lee and his new film. I'm real happy when I see a film like *The Piano* doing well in the States commercially at a time when *Titanic* is the major money-making film. The thing is, if ideas are protected then we're breached into the American culture. It's needed to protect these ideas in order to survive with life. I don't know if that will happen or if these ideas will just get marginalized.

In your films you lean towards using people who aren't strictly actors — people who come at acting from a skewed perspective, such as musicians.

Well I think that helps because I have an odd sense of contrasting a film, and also of directing. So, for example, the long takes themselves allow certain scenes without a very strong method to be longer because they're able to sustain their characters over a longer period of time without their being cut up every five minutes for the camera positions and repeating the same stage from different angles.

There are a lot of actors who are just actors and are always acting. That's something that annoys me — when I see an actor a method going on outside the character, then I'm not so sold with the character. I'm involved with them as an actor. I think that certain people who have, somehow, a broader sense of performance, like musicians, or Roberta who is also a comedian, are sometimes able to bring something to the style of acting on to the character that actors aren't. It's nothing against actors, because I think some actors are really great — musicians like Elton John for example. But it's me. There are as many bad actors, and the style of acting in American commercial films at the moment isn't very good at all.

Well it's television acting, isn't it? Looking at American TV from an Australian perspective, seeing what they're supposed to represent, it seems that year by year the reality and morality become less and less real. It's hard to believe that audiences don't accept them at any level. Yeah, and it's getting worse and worse. It's very sad to think

that American TV audiences are just mesmerized by something that is so condescending. And there's so much of it, especially with cable and video as well. In the States everyone watches television constantly — they don't read books anymore. That's partly why there's no underground culture. It's also affected people politically — things are not polarised anymore. It's all homogeneous. A lack of audacity over everything that emanates from television.

Well television is so physically small and confined — it shouldn't be that way, but the ambitions and fantasies are similarly confined. Whereas cinema is such a large and total experience. Television dominates the drama.

That's true. When you see a movie it's very magical, because you're watching it in a theater, a enclosed room, with other people. Something's like Plato's Cave. With TV everything's interrupted. Your attention span is reduced. I like what Oskar Wilde said once when he was asked about the difference between cinema and television. He replied, "When you watch cinema, you look at it; when you watch television, you look at it."

Is that sort of something foreign and magical why you seem to be attracted to Europe and the European characters as a kind of parent for the drama of the people around them?

Well, not specifically. I think that America is a country that doesn't really have its own culture, and is made up of the various cultural influences of the people who inhabited it. You could say, My family is Greek, German and Irish. So I'm all mixed up. And American culture is made of these strange mixtures. That's something which is very American.

So I'm drawn to European characters because, in a sense, they're the essence of American life. And I'm influenced by the style of film directors from France or Japan, in a way, more than I am from Hollywood. So I'm also in the middle of the Atlantic, floating around somewhere, what it comes to the themes in my films.

It's funny. I feel like I've been exposed to some American directors only through being in Europe. I became interested in Stanley Kubrick and Nicholas Ray through Godard and Wim Wenders' writings. So it's kind of a strange circular pattern, coming back to directors in your own country through directors in Europe.

And I hope that some younger American directors, in a way, will move it back again. Refuse those ideas again. Create an interesting circular pattern. Because Godard, in a way, has an application of American style in terms of Beckett and Alphaville is very fascinating. It's like a misinterpretation that brings something new.

Illustrated interview on the first page of this paper, relating to Jim Jarmusch's *Macbeth* and early career, continues on pages 10-11. Notes From The Far Underground (see Peter Bradac) available through The Last Gang Of San Francisco, 248 Bryant St., San Francisco, CA 94110.



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GHANA MAKE IT?

Filmmaking in Ghana now ranges from documentary to the latest Herzog extravaganza. MARCUS GREEN reports.

Francis Kwaye's face turned into a very smile as he gave the story line to the latest film the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (GFIC) had produced.

It was one of six films the Ghanian producer is shooting, although it is unlikely that many locals will see it. Unlike other films shot in Ghana, this one has been taken to Germany and given the treatment reserved for big productions. It was the latest audio adventure from Werner Herzog and Klaus Kinski.

Khaled Kwaye, in the huge studio set in the Ghanaian capital of Accra, a tank containing the last of Herzog's film water to be shipped home to Berlin. When it returns as a finished film, Kwaye's face may bear more than a grimace, as did the faces of many Australian Aborigines when they saw the trials of Herzog's Australian project, where the Great And Small.

Putting together a package of production facilities that can entice foreign filmmakers and their company to Ghana is now something of a priority for the GFIC. Herzog's film, *Carnage*, has provided a major impetus to the change in the GFIC's approach to filmmaking, which, before 1985, was restricted to documentary filmmaking alone.

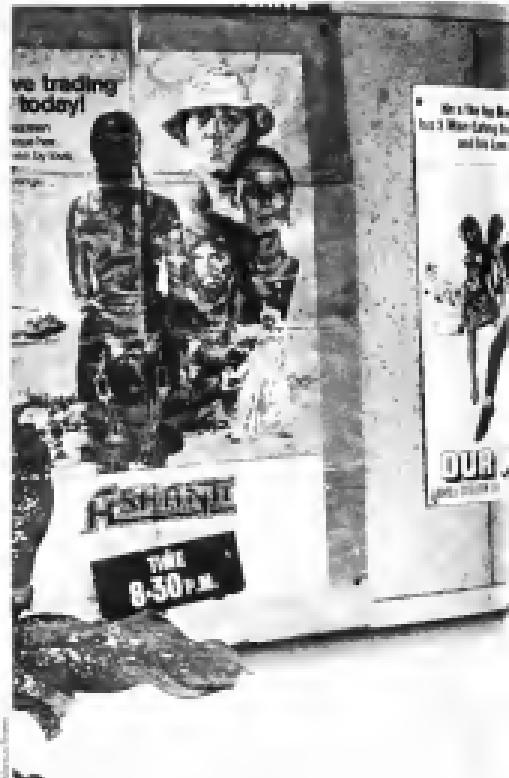
But who could resist Herzog's story line as described by Kwaye? "Someone from Brazil comes to Africa where there is a catastrophe," says, "or the guy from Brazil helped another chief from another tribe train some warriors, and defeat the other chief!" Werner Herzog, distinctly similar to Pavarotti, etc. Available for a stupendous African Film Industry to enter into as its producer...

At present, all movie film produced in Ghana is black and white. "We plan to have a colour laboratory in Accra," Kwaye, the corporation's head, retorted last week, adding that distribution of Ghana's films happens mostly through its embassies. (The nearest Ghana embassy to Australia is in Tokyo.)

He spoke enthusiastically of the quality of the studio sets, with its air-conditioned comfort, and facilities for creating almost any kind of light, with no extremes, save hot like many things in Ghana (and Africa). In fact, nothing, the studio is not used to full sunlight. "Generally in Ghana we don't shoot films in the sun. We shoot outside. In the normal environment," he said.

Capturing something authentically in itself is not easy for Africans in those post-colonial days, as they struggle to find forms of social organisation and government that reflect their own history, rather than that of their past colonial masters. According to Kwaye, the feature films in Ghana are "mainly stories that are set around the general arrangement of the country. They are planned to build up the people's mind about the country and what we believe." He had no hesitation in reciting the history of the GFIC and describing it as "a tool for government propaganda documentaries."

It has fulfilled this role since it was established 20 years ago when Ghana received its independence from Britain. But filmmakers still face its problems. Not only do the Ghanaian filmmakers have to market their activities to black and white film, but they also have to share the GFIC's editing and recording facilities with Ghana's



CINEMA IN GHANA. Francis Kwaye, chief sound recordist with the Ghana Film Industry Corporation.

regarding artists.

The day I visited the GFIC studios, one of Ghana's high life groups was putting down the vocal tracks for its next record using the best sound facilities the GFIC can offer, a 10-track, four-track, studio with its four auxiliary three- "It's small in comparison with Europe," Kwaye said. "We need more effort to boost the quality of the recording."

In an effort to make the facilities available to Ghanaians, the recording facility, for example, is rented for 12,500 cedis (approx. \$400) for four hours. A record takes about three days to make in Ghana.

Despite these obstacles, Ghana has produced some fine films and some less attractive ones as well. *Going There This Way*, a 1971 documentary, directed by the now emerging director of GFIC, Rev. Chris Rose, explores the role of traditional and tribal music. It looks

the story of two young people who enjoy the life of the nipaobots which used to flourish in Asaba before the fall in world commodity prices devastated and demolished the economy and much of the creative activity of the people.

The lead female character, whose father is a well-known bus-driver, cannot cope with her father's attitude to her music, which is the modern high life, with guitars and jazz drums.

Her father sees the music simply as post-colonial 'trash', while the girl and her boyfriend set off on their lads with the modern world. Under direction from her father, the couple go on a tour of rural Ghana and observe traditional music and dance.

Mundane as it sounds, the story line is impressive, as the film does what many recent Japanese films have done — especially those of peaked resumes (*The Artist* of

CULTURE ATTRACTION



Hollywood Corporation outside the GPC's theatre in Accra

Afrikywood — It describes the conflict between the new and the old and this, unlike Japanese cinema, prescribes a synthesis, where a solution to the conflict can be found.

This is the new Africa, the Africa Europeans rarely see or experience and which is another all-pervasive effect and implication.

In contrast, *Plantation Man*, The Weavers, a 1982 documentary, shows how co-producers can work against the Chameleons and their quest for a leading role in an independent, anti-imperialist Africa.

The film shows this 'super group' working together with Ghanaian musicians in preparation for a huge concert in Accra. It is a film that is especially instructive for musicians, who can flock first word, the group's drummer, trying to create African况味 in a western capitalist land, until

the poly-rhythms of Ghanaian drumming and percussion.

The result is a film that again shows us westerners, even with the best intentions, as having little sense of the African reality. The film is shot in colour, indicating that the hand provided the film for the GPC.

With only six picture theatres and a few mobile filmmobile systems that travel the country, Ghana will find it difficult to establish its film industry, as well as its own African culture.

For example, at the Ghana Film Museum, Kanda-Krobo, local people were lining up for a film, the only one advertised in that day's newspaper. It was *Adwoa*, starring Michael Gaius, Peter Utomi, Kalu Ade, Beverly Johnson, Steve Marof and Miss Gomo as the beauty girl. The subtitle of the film was 'Steve looking like Harvey'.



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IT SEEMS likely that an important report on women in the film industry will be shelved. The Report on Women in Australian Film, Video and Television Production, published jointly in 1987 by the Australian Film Commission (AFC) and the Australian Film, TV & Radio Board (AFTRB), is a 'Gateway to a Survey' postponed in 1980. The findings of the 1980 survey, like this report, help to confirm the devastating mythology that women have succeeded in breaking down traditional barriers in the industry.

The recommendations of the report's author, Steven Marsh, formerly the alternative action officer of the AFC, and Chris Pig, a researcher, are based on statistics indicating that women are still disproportionately under-represented in the industry compared to their representation in the general workforce,¹ and that there is a '... high level of occupational segregation' in the feature film industry. Some improvements have occurred, but overall these are marginal, and striking inequalities persist, particularly in technical areas and what are termed the 'key creative' roles. There are also an important set of preliminary statistics tucked away in this report under the heading of 'Demographic Details'. These reveal that women in the industry are predominantly of Anglo-Celtic origin. The authors feel that this probably reflects the industry as a whole.

Subsequent to the 1980 survey, administrators of the various training and funding bodies hoped that structural improvements to women would be overseen partly through the implementation of specific programs which concentrated on training and skills acquisition. (The most prominent examples are the women's film units.) Such programs were based on notions

of social and industrial equity and on development of long term career paths for women. Communications emerged in feminist discourses about the category of 'women's films', and the conceptual, theoretical or political arguments originally connected with women's aspiration for training are enclaved in this formulation. The result is increasing polarization of these discourses.

My main purpose here, however, is to look at the report and the angled, even acidic, stance it takes to the very organization that commissioned it in the first place — the AFC. The findings of the 1980 report are provocative and deserve wide discussion. The report is a witness to the entrenched and continuing marginalization of women.

The AFC commissioned the report in 1985, in response to one of the recommendations of its own internal alternative action program which referred to the question of women's participation in the industry generally. Based on case studies from独立 film credits in *Cinema Papers* during the 1980-81 financial year and a survey of women in the industry, the 1980 report extends the scope of its predecessor by covering women in video and television, as well as film, and by tracing career patterns. Marsh and Pig were assisted by the social researcher, Sue Cox, in the development of the methodology and sampling techniques, and a planning committee met occasionally in an advisory capacity.

What does the phasing out of the Women's Film Fund mean for women in the industry? ANNETTE GLONSKI looks at the report whose findings confirm that women are still significantly under-represented and segregated; SOPHIE CUNNINGHAM and DEBBY VERHOEVEN write about some strategies for the future.

It was important for the credibility of the survey according to Pig, that the broadest possible sample be obtained. Some difficulties were encountered finding a large enough sample in areas like script writing and cinematography. Despite this, any problems involved in the distribution of the questionnaire either television networks, Pig was delighted by the response rate of over 90 per cent of those sampled. She and Marsh had been led to believe that 'women health 1 to respond'. Indeed, the pages of the questionnaire were often covered with passionate outpourings in response to the 'open questions', and three of these could be quoted:

And who of the figures themselves? It was found, for instance, that in 1985-86, women comprised 31.3 per cent of all feature film crews, a percentage that has gradually risen since 1973. This proportion, however, was 8 per cent lower than the Australian workforce as a whole. Women dominated those areas traditionally thought to be 'female', such as make-up and wardrobe, support and administration. While almost all production co-ordinators and supervisors were women (88.9 per cent and 85.2 per cent respectively), only 29.4 per cent of all producers were women, and 18.8 per cent of all screenwriters were women. Angie Wilks of the Australian Writers Guild said, when interviewed, that the figure for writers would be higher in television.



NDs, FUNDS

particularly if sexual violence was included, surprisingly, thought that the figures for women in feature films were rather higher than she expected. A grand 6.8 per cent of directors were women. There has been virtually no improvement in the percentage of women as directors in the past 12 years.

As for the jobs considered to be "men's", women were excluded. In the same year, there were no female gaffers or location managers, and no female camera operators, although 31 per cent of camerapersons were women. As for editing, where in Europe and the US, women have a long and illustrious history, only 17.9 per cent of editors were women in Australia, whereas 60 per cent of assistant editors and 51.5 per cent of editing assistants were women.

Marsch and Pig are conscious, however, that there is some evidence to support the observation that women involved in training schemes and women's film units have moved into more traditional areas of employment. But the improvement is clearly very slow.

A number of contradicting factors emerge. One problem is the absence of childcare. Women with children are more likely to experience disrupted employment than childcare workers and men, or men with dependent children. In response to this, Marsch and Pig recommend that on-site childcare should be provided by industry employers such as the ABC, large production houses, big training bodies, and on-long term location shoots. They recommend also that child care could be exempted from the fringe benefit tax given Beazley Wright's widely publicised attacks on child care, and consider what kind of support that model proposal would receive if it were enacted. Could, let alone how, the film industry will react to the proposals as a whole?

Child care and child caring are problematic for women in all spheres, and are central to contradictions experienced by women confronting gender expectations within both the domestic and industrial spheres. There are other areas of the report which deal with the less tangible, but crucial issues of self-perception and the attitudes of others. The findings suggest that women continue to suffer systematic discrimination, resulting in their skills by employers and a lack of self-confidence. The vast majority of women were pessimistic about the likelihood of achieving their desired aspiration, yet 20.4 per cent of the women who responded based their total income from the industry and regarded it as their long-term career.

In their introduction, Marsch and Pig make it clear that the report and its recommendations flow from a specific sample and focus. Women involved in what they term "mainline jobs" — administration, marketing and distribution — were not included, nor were women in the cultural sphere such as critics and writers; those involved in cultural organisations like researchers or teachers of media and film. Both Pig and Marsch agreed that these areas are important to the larger

question of whether any change will take place in the conceptual basis of filmmaking (what kind of films are made and how). A change that will not necessarily follow from an increase in the proportion of women in the "key" positions. The report's restricted focus is reflected in the closing committee where no representative on "cultural worker" (for want of a better title) was represented.

The focus of the report is justifiable, and its recommendations are sensible. The first step in implementing the recommendations, according to Marsch and Pig, is the encouragement of wider industry discussion. Part of this would involve the employment by the ABC of a consultant to an independent organisation to investigate the findings of the report, and establish a working party of industry representatives and other associations, including cultural groups. This would seem a relatively simple matter to initiate and its inevitable consequence of the report's publication.

In October 1997 concluding its work on the report in its own newsletter, the ABC states that "structural discrimination" at the heart of sex bias meant that women have been

less able to hang on effectively for their own career advancement". It concludes, quoting from the report: "This situation should alert the industry to the need for vigilance to ensure that present levels of progress for women are not eroded, and equal employment opportunities on the basis of skill and ability become commonplace practice."

And yet, when the report was completed and launched by the Minister for the Arts, Senator Richardson, Marion Marsh had already left the ABC, leaving the position of affirmative action officer vacant. Her discussions had taken place on the distribution or follow-up of the report prior to, or to my knowledge, Subsidies@16 her departure. The only firm action so far is the establishment of a national training fund for women in the industry that was announced by the ATNSB at the launch of the report. By shifting responsibility for equality onto the Ministry, is the ABC suggesting that it is not a part of that industry? Has this led to limited discussion of the report's recommendations? Why?

The federal government passed the Public Sector Reform Act four years ago as part of its policy to eliminate discrimination against

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The recommendations are aimed at:
 - increasing the proportion of women from male, to ensuring present goals are not eroded;
 - broadening the inclusion of entry points and voluntary representation available to women so that they can compete more effectively for a wider range of posts and more posts at senior levels;
 - establishing monitoring mechanisms in the industry to identify problems and remedy them, in order to measure implementation and wider industry discussions. The Australian Film Committee should track the employment of a consultant selected in an independent organisation for the purpose of further investigation of the findings of this report, and to establish a working party with representatives from all industry sectors. This working group should include representation from FATO/FIA, Screen Australia, production houses, government production houses, the ABC, SBS, industry funding bodies, industry unions, and other associations.
2. Should note the:
 1. Evaluate the report and its recommendations, and report to the ABC on proposed steps for implementation.
 2. The development of a "Jobs@16" program similar to that currently running in the UK, with union and industry partner support, to integrate women's training with their employment.
 3. Government policies for women's employment in the run the Affirmative Action (Equal Opportunity for Women) Act 1989.
- These organisations are explicitly mentioned by the ABC (plus) on the basis of industry goodwill, to provide plans for the next few years which lead to the equal employment of women, and concrete action plans must:
 1. These plans can incorporate:
 - employment opportunities for women into those jobs in which women are under-represented, employment opportunities for men in upper echelon jobs, a which women are under-represented;
 - promotion of these measures through recruitment and promotion of women in executive positions for these women thought by employers to be seeking the wider and expansion to fit required job;
 - incorporation by employers of programmes to address underrepresentation and skill shortages in employment practices to ensure they are not discriminatory.
 2. Monitoring of ABC gender applications in an equal environment. The logging of the responses by gender, type of genre, and nature of post is necessary in order to ensure that the effects of generalisation of funding programs are known and monitored.
 3. Affirmative Action (Equal Opportunity for Women) Act 1989.
 4. The provision of pamphlets in every workplace on sexual harassment, equal employment opportunity, federal and state affirmative action legislation.
 5. Acknowledges for supervisor and managers in the workplace on the basis of gender the importance of approaches on sex bias, sexism, sexism of choice (being a woman is not synonymous with participation), and other related sexual bias practices. These should be jointly funded by the ABC and the ATNSB.
 6. Consultation with women's groups and associations to develop measures appropriate to the film industry and industry-specific issues in respect to discrimination and affirmative action measures.
 7. Positions on-site or on-call of 20 per cent should be a goal of industry employers with substantial numbers of employees more than 50 ABC, large production houses and training bodies. Subsidised child care fees should also be promoted for employees.
 8. Long-term location should should "reflect on-site child care in contract agreements. Child care costs are to change from the fringe benefit tax and can be included in package contracts for men and women.

women and disadvantaged groups. In 1984 the AFC established an affirmative action working party. In 1985 it initiated an in-house affirmative action program and Marian Marsh was appointed affirmative action officer. In 1986, after research into staffing and hiring practices, the AFC's report proposed by her was presented to the Commissioner. It is not freely available. This report dealt with the status of women, migrants and the handicapped. A separate report was being prepared on Aborigines.

The AFC's record has been quite positive and women have been appointed to senior positions. However, the internal report noted not surprisingly, that women in the AFC tended to cluster, numerically, in support and secretarial roles, particularly in the production division of the AFC (*Film Australia*). A high degree of sex segregation and segmentation is noted, also exists in the film industry as a whole. A number of programmes and initiatives were implemented for internal reforms within the AFC but the working party no longer exists to monitor these reforms. No representative for Marian Marsh was found. The position has been converted to part-time. The permanent manager, Yvonne Ryan, is now required to undertake the duties previously administered by a full-time specialist officer. No affirmative action officer will be appointed at *Film Australia*, according to Ryan until after July 1988 when it will become a wholly owned

government company. When asked for more detail on current plans for implementation of the 'affirmative action plan', as it is known, Ryan only commented that all aspects of the plan would be re-addressed in the light of what's happening at *Film Australia*.

Was it bad timing or pure coincidence that as the resources for the report were being prepared, early in 1987 it was announced that the Women's Film Fund (WFF) would be wound up by 1989? This decision has been met with a mixture of resignation and alarm. The reasons for its abolition after a lengthy review seem to be based on two assumptions. The first is that women are given disproportionately equal access to funding within the AFC, particularly within the Creative Development Unit. (At the very least one could point to the structural impediments to women in the feature film industry and I suspect that the figures for the Special Production Fund would be less than encouraging.) The second rationale for support for without alternatives advice, banking and the marketing role associated with the fund. These duties are to be devolved to the affirmative action officer and others within the AFC. The WFF's manager is the sole project officer with an extensive brief and tiny funds (\$180 000 per annum). The findings of the report suggest that the level of monitoring of industry and internal AFC funding activities provided by an over-worked and under-funded full-time

manager, will be necessary for many years to come. Many who spoke about the fund stated that "The report [1987] destroyed the myth that we don't need the Women's Film Fund... or training schemes such as the women's film unit" because the support offered here "opened doors and gave women confidence".

But the much-mooted plan upon which these actions are based appears to be in suspended, shovelled into the closet, along with a myriad of other reports on the state of the industry. It might emerge some time towards the end of 1988 as an independent Plan Australia, but it's unknown. A necessary gift to women, Aborigines and migrants, courtesy of government legislation, but hardly a gift from the heart, and a gift of all the same. That still leaves the AFC staff.

The WFF continues for the moment. The current manager, Penny Rabine, stated that she used the 1987 report and its recommendations as the basis for the WFF's new management role. The manager's responsibilities revolve around the initiation and administration of a range of programs and projects. (For details, see right). This is in addition to the on-going advice and assistance provided by all managers at the WFF who had been appointed because of their background in film production. It is difficult to see how the rôle of the affirmative action officer, whose responsibility is to oversee the implementation

WITHINERTIA



1986 issue

The history of the Women's Film Fund may be characterised as anything in comparison from the dogged history of *Catfish* (1978) to the critical features of *Reel Coloured Girls* and *With Thyself* (1982). That move from *The Depression* of the 1930s to the depression of the marginalised subculture described in *With Coloured Girls* paradoxically be viewed with optimism. The fund's recent engagement of a broad range of perspectives indicates its ability to respond to the changing constituency of feminism.

The *Reel Coloured Girls* and *With Coloured Girls* indicate a trend towards a plurality of possible feminist representations. Also *Coloured Girls* has been described by its director, Tracey Moffatt, as a film that questions not only the history of encounters between white men and Aboriginal women, but which also "questions the now-established genre of the Aboriginal film".

With *Thyself* comes out a series of impassioned female approaches to rape, sexism, and the frustration of the women confronted with these problems. As one of the main characters, Marge Gleeson, appropriately put it, "we thought it was about depression, but if it had gone on for much longer it would have been more about desperation".

Following the Australian Film Commission (AFC) announcement that the fund will be wound down over the next three years, and closed in 1990, supporters of the fund have every reason to be depressed.

Reasons for the winding down of the fund are complex. In part they represent a protest against inadequate funding. Co-ordinators can no longer be expected to work under the pressures that result from administering the

The Women's Film Fund — Some Current Initiatives:

1. A proposed series of six half hour low-budget television dramas in new or development and drawn together from writers, producers and directors.
2. Instituting writer workshops and writers-in-residence programs in South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland, with a view to developing ideas and scripts for possible funding.
3. Subsidies will be provided on application, to women who wish to attend approved technical training short courses on a limited number of places.
4. Researching, with other low financial support, a report in video recording at Open Channel in Victoria, for women writing experience in video production hopefully to be reported in 1989.
5. Proposing production of *Women's Issues* to accompany the Film Writers' production of *I Witness the*, a teaching tape about women working in the technical areas of the film industry.

of legislation and other institutional responsibilities, can absorb the role of the Women's Film Fund Manager when "revolution" occurs in 1990. One does not make the other redundant.

The decision to abolish the WFF, seen in the context of the uncertainty surrounding the affirmative action plan within the AFC, suggests a lack of commitment on the part of the AFC political party on the larger question of structural change and a rather futile attempt at cost-cutting. And who knows, maybe the joke circulating around the industry, that the "AFC" stands for "Australian Permanent Committee", really isn't.

Equal opportunity and affirmative action programs are bound to be controversial in an industry where the agenda is dominated by

commercial considerations and concerns about the autonomy of the local industry (eg co-production agreements, foreign links etc). In a climate of uncertainty regarding the fundamentals of film financing, notions of equity and social justice, or the fundamental structural basis of the industry, come a poor last.

The current report demonstrates that rapid structural change through short term programs is the key to revitalising liberal arts. Many women working in the industry know it all along. Despite figures to the contrary no comfort can be gained from the statistics.

There are other voices and they are asking other questions. "Is this" questions. As Liz Jacka observed recently, what are the options for women filmmakers at the present time?

turns with limited support. Other reasons have included the belief that conventional avenues of funding are now more open to women, and that it is appropriate that affirmative action measures are taken by larger institutions such as the AFC.

Implicit in this concern is that the existence of the Women's Film Fund has allowed the film industry to continue to marginalise the women who work within it.

We wish to particularly examine the last paragraph of the head. Does the existence of the Women's Film Fund effectively marginalise the claims of women on funding institutions?

One response to this argument is that if larger institutions did not themselves marginalise the Women's Film Fund the problem would never arise. Since the government and large film bodies do not take affirmative action seriously enough to provide more than \$100,000 a year to this fund, can we really expect them to support other affirmative action policies? As Annette Bryant suggests in her article in this issue of *Cinema Papers* there is already cause to question the AFC's commitment to affirmative action.

Another response would be to question the terms of the criticism itself, its understanding of "the margin". Where is it, and who defines its boundaries? This marginalised female subculture which is the focus of WFF funds would perceive the Women's Film Fund as a privileged bureaucracy. In contrast, the makers of films such as *Crocodile Dundee* would certainly see the fund as on the fringe.

To accept claims of marginalisation is to accept the authority of those who decide where those boundaries lie. We would argue

that the boundaries need to be reconsidered, and groups presently defined as marginal should become active in this process.

The Women's Film Fund has been instrumental in developing a strong network amongst women in the film and video sectors. These networks need to be developed and broadened — the boundaries need to be extended.

A specific example of the way established networks can be strengthened is demonstrated by the activities of a collective formed to organise the Women's Film Fund International held at the end of this year. Spoleto Film and Video Festival in Melbourne. The day of commentary and screenings will be one of the best attended events of the festival, reflecting a high level of interest in the fund.

During the summer and later discussions a large number of women expressed their interest in the fund's future, formulating their concerns with the following motto: "We strongly advocate the continuation of the Women's Film Fund on the basis of the present large recognition of women's participation in all aspects of film, video and television production." This collective hopes to continue to provide a focus for women who wish to take action in response to the winding down of the fund. Further meetings have been organised to discuss what forms such action should take.

A group such as the Women's Film Fund Collective plays an important role in strengthening existing networks. However it is important that while such consolidation occurs, broader issues relating to women's involvement with the film and video industry not be forgotten. One possible classifier for

Without skills and experience, and schemes like the women's film units, women remain marginal to the mainstream industry, but they are equally ghettoised within "women's cinema". If women do enter the mainstream in greater numbers, particularly as directors, Jacka says, "How can women's filmmaking emerge into the mainstream without vastly utilising it, as women feature directors have so far been forced to do for the most part?"

As for the report, few people have read it or even seen it. You can buy it from the AFC, but it deserves to move beyond a casual read. The document does not speak of a particular kind and so it cannot stand alone. I can only end the piece at the beginning like so many others, with an invitation to extended serious discussion about women's filmmaking.

1. Marion Marin & Chris Pig. Report on Australian Film Values and Feminist Production 1987, published by the Australian Film Council in a compact with the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) as documents in the AFTRS Work Unit report, unless otherwise indicated. The report in public can be purchased for \$20.00.
2. Penny Ryan. Marginal Notes. *Cinema Papers* November 1987, pp. 16-18.
3. Project on Women in Australia's Production. AFC News October 1987, no. 54, p. 6.
4. Australian Film Commission Report. Affirmative Action Program/Management Plan for Equal Opportunities 1988. Internal report circulated to the public.
5. Cinema Papers 69 September 1987, p68.

such expansion has been taken up by Film Fatale.

Film Fatale formed last year with the general aim of broadening the constituency of feminist cinema. One of Film Fatale's specific aims is to address the disparity between the number of films made by women and the decreasing opportunities to actually view these films. As well, they hope to encourage audiences actively to contribute to the programming process.

One of the ways Film Fatale seeks to achieve these aims is by providing a space where women's films can be exhibited and discussed. Following a successful season in April of this year, a series of thematic screenings have been planned at the Goodhouse cinema next February. It is hoped these will provide a variety of discussions concerning the relationship between economic and social experiences, the representation of women in the spaces, and their position in the film and video industry.

As well, a series of more informal screenings are planned at a Melbourne video cafe on a fortnightly basis. Women will be encouraged to bring along their own work and share ideas in a casual but constructive context.

These groups represent two possible responses to continuing hostility towards a developing women's cinema. In the entrepreneurial context the positive sense of the Women's Film Fund must be seen as cause for ongoing activity, rather than wasted with inertia.

* The Women's Film Panel Collective and Film Fatale can be contacted at P.O. Box 1001, Fitzroy, Victoria 3065.

BONDAG

In the first part of this article, published in the previous issue, there was a short analysis of how various authors have viewed James Bond's rise to the status of popular phenomenon. In particular, there was an examination of the contention by writers Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott¹ that this was due to Bond's "ability to co-ordinate . . . a series of ideological and cultural concerns that have been enduringly important in Britain since the 1950s" (p16). The two issues already looked at are "relations between West and East" and "nation and nationhood". SCOTT MURRAY examines the third concern, the "relationship between the sexes particularly with regard to the construction of images of masculinity and femininity".



EWWOMEN



There are many myths surrounding the "Bond girl." These range from her physical characteristics to her role in the narrative, from the state of her sexuality to her relationship with Bond. It is hard to know why so many myths persist; particularly, why writers such as Umberto Eco and Bennett and Woolfson should reinforce so many of them.

In *The Agent A-Qui*, Eco posits a model which he argues fits all the Bond women except Vivienne Michel and Mary Goodnight. Eco writes:

Damaged by the Villain, . . . Damaged woman has already been previously emasculated in domestication, left for her having assumed the role of the victim. The general schema is (1) the act of domestic and good, (2) she has made tragic and unhappy by severe male influence in adolescence, (3) she has surrendered her to the service of the Villain, (4) through marriage Bond she appreciates human nature in all its varieties, (5) Bond possesses her but in the end leaves her (quoth). As this model is reasonably supported by Bennett and Woolfson, the main points are worth examining here individually.

Bond's sexual partners are young, hence "girl".

Bennett and Woolfson write, "It is . . . always a girl [Bond] encounters, never a woman" (p115). Piero Colombo goes even further and uses the term "girl-child".

Yet, the average age of Bond's female companions is Fleming at 23.¹ She is, then, a woman, not a girl. That Fleming used the latter term almost exclusively, one presumes, will because he felt "girl" a more erotic description. It is not an option for academics.

As to the films, producer Albert R. Broccoli says that Bond's love/sex interest must be a woman, not a girl, "Otherwise it becomes rape. Bond's ladies must give the impression of being experienced with men."²

Character ages are rarely given in films, but the average age of those actresses selected for Bond films is about 25.

• The 'girl' is "beautiful and good".

Beauty in physical beauty is, of course, subjective. However, it is clear that Fleming wished that most of his female characters be viewed as physically attractive. And at his attempts to so render them, Fleming perhaps inadvertently created a physical type to which most of Bond's romantic interests conform. That type can be paraphrased as:

Dark hair (blond) hair; blue eyes, high cheek bones, small nose, wide, rounded mouth, clean,青春的 youth; body measured like little girls up and outwards, about 3' 7" in height, and with "full lips, full bosom, spindly, pale, breathy".

As in the adjective "good", it is used by Fleming to describe an asset qualities that are not at first being grasped, given that some of the Bond women are working for a villain. However, "good" is an arguably accurate description of all Bond women.

Female beauty on screen is again a subjective issue, but it is different with film in that one watches an actress playing a character and one responds primarily to the actress, rather than the scripted character. With a novel, one imagines a character's physique, based on the author's descriptions, and responds to that imagination.

Surprisingly, given the majority of the Bond novels (see note 2), the main concern has much of the Bond screen women in dark, not fair. Given also the number of novellas, it is perhaps unsurprising.

More important, the films differ from the novels in that several of Bond's bed companions are in no way "good" morally. One thinks of Miss Tira (Barbara Mandrell), Flora Wellesley (Luciana Paluzzi) and Pamela Black (Barbara Carrera). When Fleming created a truly evil woman, such as Bond's wife, he never put Bond in bed with her. The films take a different position.

The Bond 'girl' is a spy or in the service of the villain.

Fleming argues that a mix of 11 Bond women fits his clearly stated goal: Bond, Honeychile, Radio, Tidy Miserere, Ruby Wanda, Tracy de Vicente and Kateri Sando are at no stage in the service of any villain. In fact, there are at least only seven possible candidates for Bond's model.

Vesper Lynd and Tatiana Romanova are spies, Dominic West is Largo's mistress, and Penny Gabora, Solitaire, Tiffany Case and Bill Masters are, to a lesser degree, working for villains. But Bond is quite innocent and ignorant of Largo's treachery, and Bill's only crime is to help Goldfinger do a little cleaning at cards.

Thus, only Tatiana, Solitaire, Penny and Tiffany can be reasonably said to be on the "wrong" side; that is, in only five of the 15 cases.

The film counts in favor (belatedly) on the Germanic and Soviet Bond films, 30 of the women Bond sleeps with are associated with villains, 18 are not (see chart). And two of the 20 are the two associations of Dominic (Claudine Auger in *Thunderball*) and Kim Bouvier in *Never Say Never Again*. In each case Dominic is at least of Largo's acquaintance if not of the moral order.

Bond ideologically repositions the 'girl', usually via his seduction of her.

This is Bond's position, though he does not appear to differentiate, as perhaps he might, between Bond's mere presence on the scene and his having slept with the woman. One writes of how Bond finds from the woman from the villain's dimension and, thus, from her unhappy past (p17). In the process, she goes through an ideological transformation; that is, she becomes with Bond instead of the villain.

As for Tatiana and Solitaire, I can find no passage which clearly states their position, but it is simply clear that they support Bond over the "villain". They write of Tatia "now she is already 'nearly' in place both sexually and ideologically, Bond's services are no longer required" (p18).

Now, as seen above, there are five Bond women on the "wrong" side ideologically.

Vesper, a double agent, sleeps with Bond only near the end of *From Russia*, and after the mission is completed. But she does not have a complete ideological transformation and remains suspect. So, in Eon's terms, it is a failure for Bond here.

Solitaire, a card reader for the seance Mr Big, has already decided to leave before meeting Bond, she has just been waiting for someone to help her escape. And when she decides that should be Bond, she blackmails

him into losing her. Thus, her ideological conversion is quite independent of Bond.

Tiffany ideologically abandons her employer after meeting Bond, but will continue sleeping with him. However, Fleming makes it clear that she is personally attracted to Bond by the fact he is not a cynical like those she works for and with. It is telling that, when she later respects Bond for being a crook, she immediately loses interest in him.

Tatiana sleeps with Bond on their first meeting; she has been ordered to do so by MI6/Russia, just as Bond has been so instructed by M. Her ideological conversion is post-sex, but Fleming seems to recognize facts that Tatiana may have planned a defection to the West before meeting Bond (a result of Kiefer's Indian attack, perhaps?). However, most of the evidence suggests that her conversion came be put down to Bond's presence and the sexual magnetism she feels for him.

Penny in *Thunderball*'s notorious Indian gauntlet and one of Bond's more challenging conquests, but Penny chooses Goldfinger at the very last moment, that is, after the raid on Fort Knox. Clearly the decision to defect reflects her sudden realization that Bond represents a better route to safety than does Goldfinger. One can't really count this as an ideological transformation. Whatever, the decision was made entirely by Penny, her contact with Bond in the prison having been only minimal and short-term. This then quite inexorably for Bennett and Woodhouse to write:

"In repositioning Penny Odore sexually, Bond also repudiates her plausibly denigrating her from the service of the villain and recruiting her as a supplier of his own income" (p17).

In summary, probably only nine women change ideological sides after sleeping with Bond; one is independently of her, one doesn't at all, and one does after having spent time with Bond, but not having slept with him. This is used support rather far Eon's theory.

Roma Varga says no to Bond in *Thunderball*.

Jane Bond is able to make love in a moment, and she turns to her favorite chair, saying "We repeat, and immediately return to the side of right and virtue."

This may be the perception of Fleiss and several critics, but even the evidence doesn't support it. Of the 14 true supporters of villains, eight don't change sides after having had sex with Bond, and the two cases are ambiguous. As well, two others experience ideological conversion before setting the hero into tool.

Of the five women discussed above, the first is to be transformed to the screen as Tatiana (Claudine Barillot). Her ideological conversion is left until the last moment, no doubt for reasons of suspense. When the evil Eva Kiefer (Lucia Lapena) enters the hotel room, Tatia looks at it and has no intention of giving Kiefer away to Bond. It is only after she has left the room that she takes the step of siding with Bond (i.e., the West). Her attraction to Bond must be regarded as a primary factor in her decision.

Penny (Honor Blackman) converts after sleeping with Bond on the saddle bay. Details in the novel, however, is sexually and ideologically repositioned by Bond.

Tiffany (Julie St John) begins on the "wrong" side and ends on the "right", shifted by Bond

BOND WOMEN IN BOOKS

- Casino Royale - Vesper Lynd
- Live And Let Die - Tatiana (Solitaire) Romanova
- Moonraker - Solitaire (Gold) Bond
- Diamonds Are Forever - Tiffany Case
- From Russia, With Love - Tatiana (Trixie) Romanova
- Dr No - Honeychile (Honey) Radi
- Goldfinger - Jill Masterson, Tilly Masterson, Penny Gabora
- Thunderball - Dominique (Diamond) Vitale
- The Spy Who Loved Me - Tracy de Vicente
- On Her Majesty's Secret Service - Le Centurion Terres (Tracy) De Victoria, Ruby Wanda
- You Only Live Twice - Kateri Sando
- The Man With The Golden Gun - Mary Goodnight

But she is such a witty character that no-one knows in what direction she will fit off on next.

Sabine (Janet Seymour) does not appear to have planned to escape from Mr Big's (Sir Kenneth (Robert Hossein)) before meeting Bond, though she is clearly scared of his looks. And the changes takes long before sleeping with Bond in bed, she lies to Mr Big about a secret reading on Bond's file card. It is true that it is assisted by having drawn the Lovecraft card, but Bond can hardly be held responsible for that.

As to where in the "right" side, returning non-flirting examples are Tatiana (Olga Karlatos), May Day, Anya Amasova and Paloma Franco.

Tatiana "adopts" Bond as a host, Bond quickly becomes her suspect but answers. Later, Bond tells her with the Q-designed pen, having noted totally in repetition her apologetically.

May Day (Olga Karlatos) does change sides, and (mostly) after a session in bed with Bond. But there is no indication that it was the maturing factor, rather, it is because she has been abandoned by her boss.

Anya Amasova (Barbara Bach) is a Russian agent ordered in a temporary agent of distrust to work with Bond. She is hardly on the "wrong" side, though, because the loss of The Spy Who Loved Me, as with several others, suggests that deep down, Anna and Tatiana are really allies (possibly where SPECTRE is concerned). However, Anya has a central purpose in that she wishes to avenge her lover's death at Bond's hands. But she works on her resolve after having slept with Bond — an ideological success of sorts.

Pink (Barbara (Doris Fulmer)) is another Russian spy who changes with Bond in a type of drama, but with double-cross in mind. She fails to claim him out of a recording, just as he fails to repetition her.

Bond repositions girls of "dislocated" or "deviant" sexuality.

This is a myth maintained by Leacock and Woolfson and, in different terms, by Eric Patain, from *Bond And Beyond*.

"What, then, is at the centre of 'the girl' within the narrative?" (Patain) The constitutes a problem of knowledge: a troubling enigma which Bond must resolve. This means taking the form of a circularity "out of place" as the aspect that, in varying degrees and in different ways, "the girl" departs from the requirements of femininity as specified by patriarchal ideology. (111)

Parties on the authors' write:

Over the mystery of "the girl's" displaced sexuality has been accounted for, the problem she poses is one of cause: will Bond successfully respond to the challenge of reflecting her sexual maladjustment and, thereby, correctly mitigating her within the patriarchal order? Clearly, of course, he does. In thus responding to the challenge posed by "the girl," putting her back into place beneath her flesh (literally and metaphorically), Bond functions as an agent of the patriarchal order. (111)

Of the 13 Bond women, the label of sexual "out-of-place" applies meaningfully to only five women.

Pussy Galore was raped at 12 and is a lesbian. She finally sleeps with Bond, as seen above, after having changed to the side of "right" and after Bond's mission has been completed.

BOND WOMEN IN FILM

CONNERY'S BOND

FILM	WOMEN ASSOCIATED WITH VILLAIN	OTHER WOMEN
DR. NO (1962)	Mrs Taro (Zora Mervyn)	Sylvia Trelawny (Mother Carsten); Honey Rider (Doris Akers)
FROM RUSSIA, WITH LOVE (1963)	Tatiana Romanova (Galina Romanova)	Sylvia Trelawny; Viva (Alice Cox); Zara (Marina Romanova)
GOLDFINGER (1964)	Jill Masterton (Shirley Eaton); Pussy Galore (Moira Brooker)	
THUNDERBALL (1965)	Dionisia (Dionisia) Derval (Claudette August); Flavia Valente (Lydia Pimentel)	Patricia (Molly Peters)
YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE (1967)	Milga Reimann (Karen Ober)	Aki (Akiko Wakabayashi); Mary (Mrs. James)
DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER (1971)	Tiffany Case (Julie M. Wilson)	
NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN (1983)	Felicia Stark (Barbara Carrera); Dominique (Kari Bremmer)	Ruthless girl (Valerie Leon); Patricia (Priscilla Gage)

MOORE'S BOND

LIVE AND LET DIE (1973)	Roxie (Cherie Lunghi); Solitaire (Liane Seymour)	Ruthless agent (Madelaine Smith)
THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN (1974)	Audrey Andress (Maud Adams)	Mary Goodnight (Lois Chiles)
THE SPY WHO LOVED ME (1977)	Blondie (as the Queen); Anya Amasova (Barbara Bach)	Analysist
MOONRAKER (1979)	Charlotte Haze (Catherine Clivell)	Mischievous (Dame Judi Dench); Holly Goodhead (Lois Chiles)
FOR YOUR EYES ONLY (1981)		Melina Havelock (Carol Royle); Constance (as Cassandra) Harries
OCTOPUSSY (1983)	Domino (Maud Adams); Maggy (Kathleen Widdess)	
A View To A Kill (1985)	Mae Barre (Gwyneth Jones); Pink (Barbara Bach)	Final point; Sleepy Susanna (Dionysia Barbara)

Note: This chart is only of women with whom Bond has presumably had sexual relations, "presumably" because it is not always easy to tell. For instance, all Bond is sent to die "unnecessarily" with Melina Havelock (Catherine Clivell) in order to make points, but the intention of sexual relations is clear. And what of Lois (Lois Chiles) at the beginning of *From They Love Me Not*? She is soon snatched to bed with Bond, but he later reveals to Aki (Akiko Wakabayashi) that they were interrupted by the security police. It is also revealed that Lois is an agent working with the British to help John Bond's double. Thus, she is seen to bed by the public partly for her own sake, and it is thus unlikely, given all the evidence, that anything sexual happened. Like this does not seem included.

completed, he has walked out into space. She invites Bond's eyes on the step which has rescued them.

She was running nothing but a pure (Bonneau's) game that was down in half an inch... She said, "People keep on asking if I'm like an alcohol abuser and I long on saying that it's not a game to risk me if I am, and if I'm going to be rubbed with something it's now I'd like to be rubbed with..." She ended lamely. So here I am. (Goldsborough, p128)

Clearly it is Pucci who is making the moves, free from any pressure from Bond. It is she who has independently opted to try heterosexual sex. How then can Bennett and Woodhouse claim that Bond has repositioned her sexually? How can they write of "the challenge of 'complete experience' which he faces in relation to Pussy" (p128), or refer to it as a "task"? The text does not say that way.

Tiffiny Case was also raped, by a group of hoodlums when she was 16. She is lonely and scared. And, as mentioned above, the French Bond attracts as much fear for his sexual rightness as for his sexuality. Tiffiny and Bond are much delayed in making love and, despite her being coerced by programs straight after, in a happy sexual relationship that develops. They even discuss marriage after having lived together for some time, but she finally decides to marry an American Mission Corps Major (British values don't strengthen herself). It is odd, then, that Bennett and Woodhouse should write,

the mould at which the Bond girl is cast is not exclusively feminine. Contrasted to the formula "ugly but yet attractive", the Disney is not so much a however... as Disney's own Disney formula. From *Rome Was Not Built*, Tiffiny Case finds with the possibility, but only in rape... (p128)

One should note here, also, that Bond married Tracy and was accepted by Vespa, but the dad before the wedding. Girls marry snakes! There is no evidence that the other Bond women remain uninterested, or should be.

Honeychild Rider was raped at 12 and is a "virgin" at 23. Fleming says pottery has us as innocent, or "unfertilized", but she has no sexual living up. And when she finally meets a suitable partner, she has no hesitation about sleeping with him, although, as in many Fleming novels, consummation is delayed by outside forces.

Tilly Masterson is often viewed as a lesbian (p1), by Bennett and Woodhouse (p1), but that is a mis-reading of the text. Fleming has Bond think this:

Tilly Masterson was one of those girls whose hormones had got mixed up... Powers of both man and woman, not yet completely harmonised, but confused, not knowing what they were. (Goldsbrough, p289)

(The consciousness narrative voice expresses no clear opinion on this.) But whenever Tilly's sexual inflection, she is one of the select few apt to have slept with Bond. So there is no sexual representation here.

Tracy di Vicenzo is preconscious and possibly in need of psychiatric help. Fleming describes her as "A girl with a wise, perhaps over, down" (On Her Majesty's Secret Service, p67). She is Fleming's most interesting female, partly because of a short, unhappy marriage and the early death of the resultant child. Her first sexual experience with Bond is a loveless one. Tracy "hypnotism" has cognitive clarity at the passing table. It is a long time before they

meet again, but, when they do, both realize they have found an ideal mate. But Tracy is killed after the ceremony and it is Bond who becomes "hysterical" as he staggers through the first section of *You Only Live Twice*.

These, then, represent the principal "decolonised" women. Other possibilities, though ultimately rejected, are Solitaire and Trescone.

Solitaire is said to be a virgin by Mr. Big (p111), but Bond doubts she has been reduced to one (p113). And the last two quibbles about sleeping with Bond, or even sexually teasing him, but she is delayed in consummating her interest by Bond's broken fingers and then by his being bitten by a berusella.

Vespa Michel was orphaned at 6 and has had two unhappy love affairs (p23), one ending in an abortion. However, acknowledging her bad imagery, has her wear, "... I had been a

bird with a wing down. Now I had been shot in the other." (The Spy Who Loved Me, p99) Despite these setbacks, Vespaan exhibits no sexual or penile biological hang-ups, again, other than antisocial hunting for a suitable lover.

Bennett and Woodhouse then argue for including Carla Brand. They see her as having a "contaminating fragility" (p113), but serve this opinion on the next page as a "ruse". She is certainly not cholesterol anyway, she turns bland down.

Two other Bennett and Woodhouse imbeciles are Vespa and Domino, for a "challenging aggressiveness" (p113). I can find no evidence in the texts to support this reading. Rather, Fleming portrays them, as he does almost all his women, as being independently created. There is no aggression in their behaviour with men, and Bennett and Woodhouse's "negative" description of Domino as being



BONC MICHAEL © George Lazenby and his co-stars

"over-masculine" because she drives like a man is not only inaccurate but misses the point that Bond likes women to be good drivers.

In conclusion, it has been said that Bond's behaviour is potentially "adolescent" (page 198); he sleeps with four and can be reasonably argued to have propositioned only two (Tiffany and Tracy). It is true that, three pages after making these first claims about the function of "she/he" in the narrative, Baines and Woolfson write it ("the task... seems usually... in one of 'line editing'" p111). But all of the women discussed above, save Tracy, are indicated under their first definition of narrative function. In short, their theory isn't applicable.

Rigby, while there is an argument to be put for Bond's being sexually adaptive, is quite uncharitable to me, as Baines and Woolfson do, that Bond plays the "pig" "back into place beneath him (both literally and metaphorically)". There is little evidence of Bond's sexual techniques in the books, and it is dangerous to claim that he means an "over-masculine" sex.

He takes a slightly different position to Baines and Woolfson, arguing that, as quoted earlier:

the pig... (2) has been made stupid and unhappy by women and satisfied as adolescents... (10) through exploring female pleasure human nature in all its richness... (26)

The problem with this model begins with point (2), simply because there is no "pig" woman in all of Fleming. This reduces the model sample to zero.

Eric also writes that,

in the moment in which the Women solve the opposition in the Film by enacting sex & participating purified, uncomplicated, she names in her dominance of the square dyad. This isn't true either, as that, of the 13 women Bond has been sexually involved with, not one returns to the service of the villain, though five do. That is, none of the 13 women are, at novel's end, totally free of "the domination of the negative".

Given the obvious appropriateness of these and many other two claims, one has to question his precision for reducing complex narratives to simplistic schematics. As they are accurate to only an extremely small percentage of times, there is little to gainsay his analysis. In short, his writings on Bond do nothing to enhance his reputation as a scholar.

The film doesn't provide much pay for those looking to see Baines and Woolfson's and Rigby's theories, which, of course, were largely written about the books. The film's characters have made little attempt to give the Bond women any complexity, and their psychological make-up is easily fanned at.

Baines and Woolfson write that in Goldfinger,

not only does Pussy be represented as helpless... Unconscious by sexual division, [Pussy] is treated with respect by Goldfinger and handles Bond with full tenderness. As a consequence, his adolescent come-on is a relatively uninterested affair (p49).

But Pussy is quite clearly represented as a virgin in the film, albeit with a little more understanding than in the novel.¹¹ Unlike in the novel, Bond heartily pushes Pussy into

trying heterosexual sex, and she emerges from the cabin a "true woman".

Tilly (Dame Judi Dench) is not represented as sexually confused, or, indeed, as there is no chance of Bond's affecting a sexual propositioning here. Anyway, he fails in his attempts to seduce her.

In fact, Honey (Ursula Andress) does tell Bond of how she had been raped, but there is no evidence of her being a "virgin", or of her being interested about sex; the impression is quite the contrary. The casting of Andress is significant in this regard.

Of the Company Bond women, Pitmea Black is the only other example of "adolescence". (Tiffany and the two Germans certainly don't beg inclusion.) Pitmea appears to have put her sexuality readily in the service of evil ends, a case, as a verb, of domination but of self-reinforcement. And she certainly doesn't seem too keen on Bond's presents, pointing her gun directly at them. Though Bond does sleep with her, he fails, in Baines and Woolfson's terms, to represent her within the patriarchal order.

Tracy (Diana Rigg) in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* is unadulterated, voluptuous, seduced by a bad marriage and possibly a much younger man. She is, then, a close approximation of her narrative counterpart. And the does seem largely represented by her relationship with Bond (George Lazenby), though she often assists in Rigg's performance a great performance of her partner's sexual effects.

Where the film differs significantly from the novel is in having Tracy and Bond begin their affair prior to her visit to Pal Giono. His sleeping there with Anna (Anna Saksen) and Nancy (Caroline Van Schie) makes one wonder about his purported love for Tracy.

As to the Moon/Bond women, Solitaire and Octopussy are the possible "adolescents".

There is much discussion about Solitaire's virginity and how she will live her sexual powers over the sleep with a man. This has led several writers, including Robert Sillier¹² and Sally Abberley,¹³ to claim that the loss her purity when she sleeps with Bond. But such a reading is incorrect. Solitaire fails to notice that Bond has used a rugged piece of hotel candy, and she leaves the last cigar with him.

Octopussy (Julian Adams) is an interesting case, for though she lives surrounded by women there is no evidence that she is not attracted to men. And after a night with Bond, she behaves as if all this can be justified.

There is, in fact, an archetypal Bond girl.

I don't believe so. The Bond women in Fleming may share certain physical characteristics, and a few have had similar traumatic experiences at their youths, but they remain unique and individual.

If one must generalise, then one can say they are independently minded, sexually healthy, supported by moral convictions and male roles, natural, unaffected and caring. In short, they are remarkable literary creatures in a period not far from the 1960s portraying women largely independent of male support and conviction.

Baines and Woolfson's effort acknowledge this, but with their usual

disingenuously write:

As the Bond girl embodies the cultural norms, and ideals, of a sexuality confined to the bourgeoisie, it is often a measure merely the fantasy object of her male reader, learned, through Bond, to go whoring by proxy (p12).

Professor Stephen Knight is big name of *Bond And Beyond* writes

Details of possibly great significance... are mixed, mixed and unconvincing throughout this dismally unconvincing book.

If the arguments are sometimes condensed and complex, so they are at any worthwhile area of analysis. The language and approach of the study are here as they always might be thought to those two evident or preposterous in master class.¹⁴

It is a depressing thought.

NOTES

1 Tony Baines and Janet Woolfson, *Bond And Beyond: The Political Culture Of A Popular Hero* (Macmillan Education, Basingstoke, 1987).

2 Arrested at writers on Fleming (for example, when the author studies Marita Horn, Anna, alias Anna, alias Mrs. T. The James Bond Stories, Jonathan Cape, London, 1986, with 1987 new pb reprinted by I. C. Gollancz, 1988 pb reprinted by Cassell, 1989 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1990 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1991 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1992 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1993 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1994 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1995 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1996 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1997 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1998 pb reprinted by Penguin, 1999 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2000 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2001 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2002 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2003 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2004 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2005 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2006 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2007 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2008 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2009 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2010 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2011 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2012 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2013 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2014 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2015 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2016 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2017 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2018 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2019 pb reprinted by Penguin, 2020 pb reprinted by Penguin, 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R·E·V·I·E·W·S

- Bushfire Moon
- Comrades
- Full Metal Jacket
- Innerspace
- Ishtr
- I've Heard The Mermaids Singing
- Jean De Florette
- The Lost Boys
- The Pick-Up Artist
- Prick Up Your Ears
- The Time Guardian
- The Year My Voice Broke

● BUSHFIRE MOON

The first *Bushfire Moon* miracle occurred some 30 years ago when a little American boy called Jeff Peck — the creator and writer of the film — received a letter (Jeff does not just write, he "pens letters") to Walt Disney asking him that his film was terrific and that some day he would like to work for him. In reply he received an encouraging letter and an autographed photo as well.

The next miracle occurred when Jeff Peck, now adult, living happily in Australia and still treasuring that photo, goes up our own Australian Christmas shelves in the form of *Bushfire Moon*, and adds it to — go on, guess — Walt Disney.

The film, set in 1890 and packed with still more miracles, follows well-worn tracks, tracks worn by Dickens, Barbara Cartland and an army of family films from our cultural hero, Walt Disney.

Patrick O'Day is married to Elizabeth, who is American, and they have two children, Sarah, who is 17 and "blown away", and the eight-year-old Ned. They all live together in drought-induced poverty on land which has been compulsorily acquired from their neighbours, the rich Mr Watson.

Sorrows — I mean Mr Watson — having lost his wife some years before, is vile to all and particularly vile to Patrick, Elizabeth, Sarah and Ned which seems a pity as he has a presentable 18-year-old son called Angus and, as we know, Sarah is blossoming. Moreover he (Mr Watson) has a lake and they (the O'Days) have a daughter and no money for the Christmas presents. Ned wants a hobby. Mr Watson is British to the boot straps (or wants to be), rich, powerful and a bully, and the O'Days are virtuous, down on their luck, down-on-their-luck and presumably of fresh extraction.

Once the scene comes Max Bell, a swaggie and a lovable rogue who promises, with the aid of a little blackmail, to right the wrong, bring out the best in everyone and effect a happy ending. (An ending which despite Jeff Peck's stated aversion of "magnificent soliloquies in films" could be predicted within the first 10 minutes.)

George Miller directs *Bushfire Moon* with the professionalism that one would expect from one who has *The Man From Snowy River* to his name, and manages (most of the time) to make a plot which lurches between dramatic sermon, farce, corn and mirth, all heavily encrusted with good old stock up, into a rolling story. The Australian landscape really

are breathtaking, the pace is fast with no time wasted in setting the scene and a smashing lot of slapstick demonstrates that George Miller can handle comedy with ease. (The sucking gag will probably turn a generation of Australians into vegetarians.)

The period clothing is a bit odd. The various poor seemed over-clean and over-dressed while the wicked rich were right over the top in the vulgarity stakes. Doubtless it was all supposed to add up to something but it remained the painfully amateurish elements.

John Waters plays Patrick O'Day, giving the part every grain of his strong silent masculinity. (See Wallace Siemon's bar apple pie motherhood song for the American market.) (He previously appeared in *E.T.*). Nadine Garner makes Sarah blossom with charm. In fact all are more than equal to the demands placed upon them, but two are outstanding.

Charles (Bud) Tingwell as Max Bell is, as he always is, exceptional. He looks at home in his trigger group from his big black boots to his Cliffs Rafferty hat and the challenge of being Father Christmas, an Australian Swaggy and a Lovable Rogue rolled into one is met with a relaxed and assured charm. As always, he can outspangle everyone, including an enchanting dingo pup whose performance, as the dingo pup, is to be commended.

Andrew Pergola as the eight-year-old Ned is also remarkable. It is not an easy part, Ned does not resemble any eight-year-old Australian male of my acquaintance — for one thing he is positively chunky whereas most of the eight-year-old males I know communicate in the 76 grunts of the chimpanzee. But for all his verbal sophistication Ned is a remarkably naive child compared to the sophisticated TV child of today. With an infectious smile Andrew makes it all look easy.

I have no doubt that this film will add to the lightheartedness of an Australian Christmas for years to come. It is well made, well acted and highly commercial. But whether it displays old-fashioned virtues and prejudices which have stood the test of time or whether its morals and assumptions are as out-of-date as its wardrobe I leave to the next generation of grandparents.

It is not a film made specifically for children but a film in which children play their parts — perhaps for the amusement of adults. Any eight-year-old can safely take his or her great-grandmother to see it — so long as she is not fearing the sterilisation of ideas.

spontaneous to the 1990s. If you have the right sort of great-grandmother for this film take a large box of tissues, and see that she cleans her teeth afterwards.

Josephine Goss

BUSHFIRE MOON Directed by George Miller. Producers Peter Bellamy and Robert La Fe. Screenwriter Jeff Puglisi. Director of photography David Harber. Editor Tim Williams. Production designer Christopher Morris. Music Bruce Rowden. Cast (Clockwise) Wayne Djanogly (John), and John Virgo (Peter). Director (Right) (Not in film) Paul Hogan (Tom). Andrew (Maurice) Steve Punt. Producers (Executive) Michael Gunner. Image Resources (Sales) 100 Minutes Australia 1987

• COMRADES

In 1834 six Dorset labourers were arrested, not for being a Friendly Society, which was their right, but for the burning of illegal cattle. As a result of the cracked-up charge (glancing reference is made to the King's brother and the Orange Lodge, with its secret oaths and meetings), the Tolpuddle men were transported to Australia. They were pardoned 12 years later as a result of agitation from the London-Dorset Comrades and others.

Their story is rightly seen as a landmark in the trade union movement and Bill Douglas's film pays another tribute to the solidarity of the working class then, and by implication, argues such rigorous collectivism now. Against a black ground of changing seasons, at lowering skies and sudden rains give way to the brightness of spring and the gold of summer harvests, Douglas invokes a life of grinding work and of desperate poverty as well as, say, the visible gaiety of a sash dancing a hornpipe at the village fair. That is to be a careful and honest enough not to depict these lives as jades; they are too rooted in home and family and community for that. Hardy, though, has the sheer arduousness of physical labour basic as convincingly depicted on the screen: the film takes work and working lives with absolute seriousness, in ways that recall both Hardy and Brontë.

The first half of this immensely long film slowly and painstakingly builds up the background to the arrival of the six labourers. There is an intense realism, visual and almost tactile, at times, in these scenes of haymaking, of carpentry, of square family meals, but ultimately it is not realism which Douglas is primarily after. What in fact he seems to have sought is a genuinely epic quality, achieving a reconciliation between realistic observation and distancing observation. One is moved by the individual lives dramatised before one, but is constantly made aware of the dimension of themes so powerfully at work in their presentation.

The chief means by which this is effected is the use of an itinerant itinerant who arrives in Tolpuddle after setting the brutal suppression of an outbreak of machine-smashing by labourers whose wages have been cut in below subsistence level. The itinerant, played by a Douglas regular, Alan Norton, turns up in various guises, most often in costume, with the like's assistance as the appearance of illusory. He is, for instance, a silken-cloth artist in colonial New South Wales, an optical photographer whose heliotype are inadvertently destroyed, as well as engaging with other pre-camera optical devices and presenting various theatrical performances. As well, there are carefully composed and magnified lit shots of illuminated figures, a frosted glass door which reveals three different images, depending on the angle of viewing, and an illuminated map which records the journey from England to Bassay Bay.

Douglas himself has claimed "what I wanted to suggest was the image —



BUSHFIRE MOON Andrew Penguin

of things, rather than just depict them accurately". The function is sometimes part of the action (eg, as a politician), sometimes a contemporary action. In the later role, one of his functions is to draw attention to the fictional, imagined elements of the narrative process. Douglas achieves a real involvement with the lives presented but never lets the viewer forget that this is what he is, a viewer manipulated by processes of decision-making.

The second part of the film is set in Australia and concerns the formation of the transported Tolpuddle Mutiny. It is well absorbing but it is set in more conventional ways. One works on a chain gang, making an English field, overcomes induction by the rich whites, who have concealed news of his parole, one is bought by a spy, and so on. It is more obviously a many stranded narrative individual protagonist replacing the earlier areas of a chain or bay, and with some preferable and enlightened aspects. It is also more obviously spectacular than the British version this is partly perhaps the result of a shift to a bolder landscape, but a more subtle shift with the loss of the delicate balance between realism and the display of dimension which has characterised the first third of the film.

from tradition from the more nearly
monastic acting style of the Dorset
section.

— However, all this, in the context of the film as a whole, is not much more than a quibble. Further, the film ends back in London with a celebration of the return of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, one of whom, George Loveless, is shown up on a stirring song, with 'Every working man in England to shake off that impudence / that leaves them in the position of slaves.' And he thanks the informant who has 'told the story today — it was always us if he had been present throughout himself'. The film ends unequivocally on the didactic note as has so frequently struck before. Not just in dialogue, but in the sudden/jaws-poppers created by editing (between, for example, the establishment rally urging 'We to be satisfied with our lot' and the chapel congregation sing 'We'll live the day'), in the walking men to hold shots so long that we begin to assess the length (the images of the deceased men whom the film *wants* us to remember) in the use of the lemming's device. The lemming may trade in illusion but, in this end, it is a version of reality he brings us his madness.

Even the rising sons part of the
diseased generation. The barons and their
families are played by largely unknown
actors; they might be anyone and their
importance is to represent a class rather
than individuals. They are supported by
"Hers," types of whom appear briefly as

oppressors of this class, the exceptions being Michael Hargreaves as Past, a leading member of the Committee that secures pardon for the men, and John Hargreaves as the convict who fails to escape, having been warned that he can't achieve anything alone.

Douglas has made a major film in *Cassanova* and, if the British cinema is indeed to enjoy a renaissance of some kind, one would like to think such a film might lie in its foreground. However, it is unconvincing in ways which will probably not end in commercial paths to first re-think about the conventional lines of narrative, as it prepared to risk skewwiffness and disorientation, and it begins exposing its own appetites. For those prepared to wade in it, it is also one of the richest film experiences of the year.

Green Job Workforce

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• JEAN DE FLORETTE

In 1986, Claude Berri's *Dreyfus*, *Jean De Florette* and *Mme De Fleurette*, was the cinema's incarnation of the year in France. The adaptation of Marcel Pagnol's novel *L'Amour des Champs* was a 117-million-pesos, which took 36 weeks of filming, a crew of 500 extras, 15,000 ft. of vegetation, 12,000 cartwheels, 2,000 rabbits and 12 ancient olive trees — not the usual requirements of French cinema. The two films were shot simultaneously.

Both *Jean De Florette* and *Mme De Fleurette* are, for French audiences, unashamedly French. Marcel Pagnol is still widely read, and considered the best advocate of his native Provence, but the story goes beyond cultural boundaries. It deals with the external expression of tragedy in the classical sense.

The moving sense of the identity in the face of good and suffering against a background of hostility, both from the village and the elements, could be regarded in the category of family legend, if it weren't for the intercession of forces which are bigger than the human character.

The central theme of *Jean De Florette* is the human condition itself, struggling with various hostile forces. It concerns the battle between good and evil, and the human dimension is but one factor in this Micahian vision. The naive, good, amateur Jean (Gérard Depardieu) cannot do much with his quixotic quest to live off the land, and his parodic admiration of nature. He is a city man — he does not belong, because he does not understand. His knowledge is aesthetic and emotional, but he does not know the land or the elements. Jean also carries a hereditary burden. His mother, now dead, left the village under a cloud.

The tragic trap is set before he arrives, with the death of his relative Pépé Bouffigas, which the audience witnesses as a murder, or at least an manslaughter, perpetrated by Pépé (Yves Montand) in the presence of Ulysse (Daniel Auteuil), because they both own the land.

Jean, by clearing his inheritance, represents not only the innocent in the wilderness but a genuine obstacle to Pépé and Ulysse, and he unknowingly brings back from the past a bond between families and villages of which he seems to know nothing, but which ensures his destruction.

The mechanism of the tragedy is set. It needs only a little greed to get the pugnacity in motion, and Jean is only too willing to provide it with his innocence, naivety, naïve solitude, and especially with his trust in Ulysse. Once in motion, there is no turning back, and we watch the tragedy unfold to its inevitable outcome. Even the respite provided by the temporary return of the new settler does not allow us to hope, because of Pépé's continuous running

like a lightning through the film.

Like vultures, Pépé and Ulysse spy on their prey, and search and chase as one磨坊er after another builds the unwary Jean. The whole village is watching also, more here suspicious about Pépé, but they express this among themselves. The outside has no place among them.

There is an order of things, of people, a network of belonging to a group, to a land. The relationships are oral, brief, violent interactions, but everyone stands for something. The land is land, but it is in the order of things. Knowledge of the land means survival. Death means death.

Jean, with his weapon versus, defines the order, where the elements, people and the land, have a specific place and relationships. In time, he must be crushed.

We witness every stage of his destruction, through a dramatic compression of time, in the exhausting and repetitive task of digging water — hoping against hope, watching for a sign from the horizon, in which he has invested so much trust, and resorting to all measures of human ingenuity to avoid the inevitable disaster.

At the pace of human efforts and the struggles against the breaking spirit become more intense, we see Jean digging more frantically, digging fur-

iously the parched earth, and using dynamite to defeat the rock and release the life-giving water.

The angle of death, Pépé and Ulysse, are watching, commanding hardly on the destruction of Jean, more slowly than in the scene where Jean is digging a well, and looks up to Ulysse standing on the edge, talking and discouraging him. Gérard Depardieu's rendering of the character's vulnerability is nowhere more apparent than his moving smile and imploring eyes, when he still manages to convey hope in this final enterprise against the elements.

The final drama is reached when the thunderous lightning can only to the other side of the mountains, and Jean, overwhelmed by anger and fatigue, screams out to the heavens: "I am a bankrupt, do you think it is easy for me? There is no-one up there! No-one!" It is a defiance to God by the broken hero, summing up other defiance to other gods by the tragic heroes of antiquity.

The denouement is expected, as in a Greek tragedy. Jean has been defeated and has paid with his life, for disturbing an order, which he did not know was there.

We feel that the story does not end here. There is a warning in the atmospheric opening of the last atmosphere,



JEAN DE FLORETTE: Daniel Auteuil and Gérard Depardieu

- Mason, Jean's daughter, who by instinct has always cherished Uganda, now understands why her father died. As mother and daughter leave the all-fired "Romance", the little girl is carrying the burden of a terrible knowledge: We know as we watch the last scene, that the story is not finished.

Jean De Plante is an eye film in the tradition of *cinéma-vérité*. Bruno Ruyant's photography uses light as an impetuous painter would, capturing the whole spectrum of effects; for instance, the contrast between the pitch blackness of Ugo's hat and the dazzling white sun outside when he cheerfully burns open, or the diffused light filtering through the foliage, or Papier and Ugo's eyes on Jean, or the frightening yellow light during the sandstorms. He has managed to capture the full colour and density range of Provençal light.

Light is not used only to set a scene, or create a mood, but as an integral part of the cinematic language. Light changes and gradations are used to compress time, as in the long darkness of dawn in the opening scene, and the subtle variations resulting in colour in the day scenes.

Light is used to build up elements, such as the sunburst, the thunder-storm, or the implacable brightness of the drought scenes.

Light is used to establish the contrast between the outside world, with transient brightness symbolic of the outside personae, and the obscurer of the inside scenes, where the only point of light in the room reflects on the characters' faces, as they express their feelings and inner thoughts.

Claude Berni achieves a remarkable balance between the characters in the story. Jean is supposedly the protagonist, after all the film is named after him, but he shares the focus with Papet and Ugolin. Right through the film there will be points of view shown, as if the spectator were part of Papet and Ugolin's spying game. We, the spectators, see what Papet and Ugolin see, yet we identify with Jean.

"When Bern was asked in a recent interview why such a classical film had made such an impact on today's youth and since, he replied: "It's due to the power of the story. It is a fable of life. After all it is not just one story, all the ingredients of tragedy are there: greed, lust, water. This goes beyond the Western in that the imagination of the people. It is timeless, because tragedy is a part of humanity."

Wolfgang Krammer



Suddenly, from above, The Last Days are upon us. These boys are teenagers and they have found a temporary shelter within a Multiplex movie set. Of course this observation may be of little consequence to certain sections of the moviegoing public, considering that The Last Days could be seen as just another ho-hum film, but this feature is a relatively big-budget production and therefore occupies a crowded-filled space within the cinema.

So for this decade, the *Horror* film has utilized the image of the vampire in only a few notable occasions. On budget alone, *The Lost Boys* could be compared to the 1893 effort from Georges and Théophile Méliès that is now known as *Le Jardinier* but was once entitled *Space from Space*. Although the former title of *Space from Space* may demonstrate a connection to science fiction that *The Lost Boys* doesn't possess, it is interesting to note that both films were projects that went through different periods of major re-conceptualization. Apart from *The Stranger*, *Fright Night* on Rangoon's watch, *The Lost Boys* places the work of special effects creator Greg Cannom (the stereotypical image of the vampires has remained dormant).

This may lead one to ask whether *The Last Days* could possibly alter any consciously-held perceptions of the stereotypical vampire. On the short term and perhaps most immediately basic the answer is unequivocally yes. What we have here now is a vampire film that is designed to look and sound good in every aspect. From the young, handsome ladies with designer makeups to their makeupless but alluring hair and clothing, these markedly adolescent vampires are state-of-the-art cosmetically. Not only do these particular children of the night look stunning, but their musical soundtrack is accented with careful attention to modern pop charts that probably doesn't fully appreciate the ironic relevance of such hits as

the vampire film. Unreleased songs for films of the period. Just note the number of cover versions of older songs on recent shows: "People Are Strange," provided exclusively for *The Last Days* by Bruce Springsteen; Ian McCullough and his band Echo and the Bunnymen, and "Good Times," for example.

These few elements of popular culture are neatly placed within a narrative that never deviates from convention. Basically, the story of *The Last Boys* involves a family of three, a recently divorced mother and her two teenage boys (separated by a few years) who travel to the remote resort of Santa Carla to live with the boys' grandmother (the father). While settling in, the older boy, Michael (Jason Patric), sees the remnants of the cult through a girl called Starr (Jenni Gerris). Michael spots Starr at a rock concert on the boardwalk and she rapidly becomes his love interest and main competitor to the lost boys. At the time that Michael becomes a potential recruit for the vampire gang and after taking with the boys on Chinese food and human blood he begins to develop all the traditional symptoms of vampirism. This occurs in front of the younger brother Sam (Kenny Hand), who spots Michael's reflection looking in a mirror. This motivates Sam into the traditional Van Helsing role — that of the fearless vampire killer — with assistance from resident vampire experts Edgar and Alton Fogg (Stanley Tucci and James Woods). As they plot to kill the film saves the *Mysteries all vampires* motif that speaks towards the Inevitably (hating but perceptive, illustrates conclusion).

It takes solely as a horror film. *The Last Days* may be disappointing to some viewers, even though it can produce a few good scares. It considered alongside such recent examples of the horror film as *Red Dead II* and *Halloween*, *The Last Days* becomes a model of anti-

THE LOST



• THE YEAR MY VOICE BROKE

In many ways, *The Year My Father Died* is an unlikely film in one's expectation to come emerging from the Australian film industry. From a modernist perspective, it is guilty of all the usual vices that we see in our films and television. It's a period piece, it's firmly locked into a mythical country setting, and (horror of horrors), it's sentimentalistic. From a socio-political perspective it's also guilty, not being about marginalised minority groups, neither raising alarms or the problems of single mothers. And from the marketing point of view, the film hardly has legs in a market where phantom disasters, young Brad Pitts and Great Australian Historical Events are the order of the day.

An Australian film and television move toward the "big" themes of the international marketplace, John Dargan's *The Big Picture Book* manages to breathen those broads into a very old story. That it succeeds is a testament to Dargan's increasing skill as a writer and director.

An archetypal Australian country scene, punctuated by rolling green hills, and complete with the obligatory road signs, forms the backdrop for this gentle story. It's all there — the old pub, the timber shop, even an old church — and it's bathed in that warm golden glow that the early nation seems to exude in film producers.

It is an old-fashioned film but John Dziga has managed to combine these elements into a satisfying whole, a delicate myth of an imagined childhood. The story simply revolves around a teenage love triangle, complicated by the mysterious secret of a haunted house.

Danny [Noah Taylor] is the core instigator, as well as a '90s kid, introspective, early sexual maturing, unable to realize his passion for the wild and luminous Freya [Lena Cernetti] in a seductive Latvian performance]. Freya is in turn the embodiment of the school tout, Trevor [Ben Mendelsohn]. Trevor is not a greatly sophisticated youth — he's given to making cars and has the unfortunate laugh of someone who is not playing with full deck. Despite their drawbacks, it is Trevor who Freya is all about and it is a measure of Lena Cernetti's performance that it allows us to see why.

The basic playing out of the triangle propels the film along. What saves *Plan* above these cruddy old clichés is the way in which Dujon supercharges the atmosphere, drawing heightened performances from his three leads and portraying the central characters with charm, wit and a wealth of delicate touches that give the film a special edge. A movie like this is always in danger of falling into cliche traps, but Dujon generally manages to avoid these and builds a convincing picture of the

measuring dimensions of the universe.

Danny's world is a poetic one, in which he drifts between the wonders of hyperbole, sex goddesses, space travel and the earnest, crass world of teenage confidence. He may be a gay boy in this country town, but what he does have is style, which although self-conscious and slightly, is endearing.

Tracy is another world. Slightly older — and a year or teenage current can be like a decade at any other time — she is a naturally beautiful character, endowed with a native charm and a sensuousness that always seems to be in danger of breaking over.

To Freya, the cold Tesser with his haughty and self-satisfactory air is a burning object of desire. Her feelings for Danny are merely financial, although at times her charitable nature makes Danny to forget about her intentions.

Around the triangle, Duigan creates a slightly less *satirical* group of secondary characters, mostly of the stereotypical country type that we have seen in many other Australian films. There is Faye's alcoholic stepfather, mostly played by a very red-faced Graeme Blundell. And strong support for Faye also comes from her younger sister Gail (Angie Corlett).

Bruce Spence stamps a stamp out as an absolute railway writer who is writing the great Australian exotic novel while turning himself into an absolute. Although providing some comic relief, the character is probably out of place in the paraparole style of the script.

A tendency to overwrite is probably the greatest weakness of the script. In the second half of the film Dangor seeks to reinforce plot elements by forcing the script towards melodrama — not intrinsically a bad thing but, in the context of what has gone before, not necessarily satisfactory. The focus of the film shifts from an exploration of the characters into a kind of noise-suppressed golf, but this is neither fully enhanced nor diminished out of hand. Thankfully, the two phases of the story — the relationship between the three central characters does remain valid — and the device used to implicate the man of the area into a collective golf-fest is way back into the much-neglected department from whence it came.

These wags problems only concern the surface of the film slightly. The electric performances of the three leads carry it through, as does Duggan's delicate look for the right visual and moral resonance at the right time. The opening scenes of the rolling hills of the Australian countryside, and Danny's appearance in the landscape could have been executed by many less talented directors, but it is perhaps the additional musical touch of 'The Last Accordion' that makes this one the winner. Similarly, there is a point in the film where Danny and Freya are walking at night, for a moment

THE LOST BOYS
Stephenie Meyer
Young Adult

sister. His scenes of violence are quickly edited in the manner of a video clip in which the film cuts much of his brutal actions. The *Last Days* is not a splatter film, or for that matter even a slasher film. Its most graphic scene—the destruction of a vampire in a bath full of holy water, stolen from a church by the Frog brothers while a baptism is in progress—takes precious little screen time and is more memorable for the one-line spoken by one of the Frog brothers, who claims to have just killed a member of Twisted Sister.

The *Last Days* consistently was hampered to reflect its horrific aspects and the anti-slavery and secondly by the hands of the younger cast members. On this brief note and the *Frog Brothers* reflects the aspects of horror in the film to the point where one wonders if this film is just a mere comedy. As some suggests, The *Last Days* could be described as a John Hughes film with traps. Perhaps it is as singular there that *Alfred Hitchcock* in a previous work of the direction of *The Last Days*, *Juli Schlemmer*.

If you can stand a relatively lame horror film that is more interesting as a comedy than anything else, *The Lost Boys*. Why, however, it may even become known as the first horror film of the nineties for the whole family. That is, if *Home Alone* hasn't taken the title.

Journal of Clinical Oncology

Mr. LOUIS ROYER. Directed by José Schlesinger. Pro-
duced by Harry Bernick. Executive producer: Michael
Dowen. Associate producers: Mark Towne, John
Lynn, Normandine Lévesque. Director of photography: André
Léveillé. Sound: Robert Bourassa. Art director: Paul
Julien. Set decoration: Roger Bouchard. Set
dresser: Yvonne Piché. Costumes: Diane Gagnon.
Cinematography: Pierre Létourneau. Camera operator:
Denis Létourneau. Film editor: Denis Létourneau. Casting:
Denis Létourneau. Music: Georges Lévesque. Original
music score: André Laprade. Sound: Jean Belanger,
Robert Belanger. Sound mixer: Marcel Masse. Sound
editor: Michel Courteau. Colorist: Pauline Bégin. Sound
mixer: André Belanger. Production office: Studio 100
Production. Sales: Studio 100 Production company
of Quebec. Distribution: "Montreal" Village Road
show. When: 17 minutes USA, 1982.

they pause and we see them from above a street light which is being passed by a swarm of insects. It is a dimless moment, somehow reminiscent of a hundred box Australian radios.

Dungan has an acute awareness of these local mores. Particularly in Trevor's character, we see a kind of Jewish charm that could somehow only be Australian. The comic teacher, the tendency, the self-dissociation, the sheer cheek of Trevor makes his character a million miles away from the recharged characteristics of, say, *A Country Practice*.

John Dugan is one of Australia's most prolific screenwriters, but unlike those who have caught the public's imagination, he has remained relatively unknown. Dugan's films have often suffered from his desire to be socially or politically relevant. *The Far My Dear* looks set to be most successful in this, yet is totally devoid of any political or social wheelbarrowing. Perhaps Dugan is more at ease with this simple and effective tale.

10 of 10

• THE TIME
GUARDIAN

The Ten Commandments, Australia's first attempt at high technology science fiction, is one of those undertaken formula films betrayed by a serious misunderstanding of the genre. It follows the typical "adventure film" plot — a build up the first five minutes, a handsome hero who meets a beautiful girl, wretched villains and a fight for survival against time. Far in meeting these requirements it neglects more fundamental concerns such as a plausible plot, character defining dialogue, interesting action and coherent direction.

The problems start with John Foster and Anna Higgins' song. The opening winceyewhipps tells us that it is the aftermath of global nuclear destruction in the 21st Century, and our survivors by learning to travel through time. They are pursued by the villainous Jun-Dika, a race of cyborgs (part human/part machine) who having no sense of their own, are hellbent upon ransacking the City.

In their parasitic cities, headed by Tom Hartman, the good psychopathic muckers, he forced to leave one of the City's legs (it is propped up on four legs). It causes lead to the next city, so Bellard and Peter (Kurtis Foster) are sent as the advance guard to build a railroad of rocks for the City to land on. They are beaten into a pool over an outback town called Maita where they are immediately surrounded by Aborigines men doing a corroboree, then attacked by the Jen-Dika, who have followed them. Sometimes they destroy the Jen-Dika once moved closer, which causes the Jen-Dika to give up fighting and sit in a nearby cave. Peter has been wounded as the basis for Bellard (Irene's female companion) with beautiful prognosis. Anna (Laurie Blake Coghill) Peter's girlfriend Anna and others had a mysterious audience where only function in the plot is to arouse the smothering Jen-Dika, who then pillage Maita. Bellard and Anna escape to where the City has landed. Despite the wandering of their once-tried device, Jen-Dika appears from every rock and crevice, bringing the City in the final showdown. However there is a way to save the day, and Bellard is the only hope!

Science fiction, like any other form of narrative cinema, must establish its fictional consistency as long as keep the audience interested. A problem with *The Thin Classroom* is that its plot devices lack subtlety or coherence integrating into the dramatic structure. One feels that the film was written with a approach in one hand and the adventure film received in the other. Sixty-three minutes into the film, time for some guarantees and *Ariana* impulsively takes off her clothes and jumps into a pond.

The film also has an unfortunate tendency to substitute confusion for insight. This is partly due to Bresson.



THE TIME CHAMPION Von Neumann

Hannan's discretion. Not enough attention is given to important plot points and too much time is wasted on red herrings. The audience suffers from spatial dislocation because there are an inadequate number of walls or obstacles among them. At one moment the enemy are a few feet away, the next moment they appear to be two miles away. The hide-and-seek sequences particularly suffer from this and are not as well-written as the Jerry-Take-off's appear to be above us themselves.

The actors would have been better off if they had not taken their dialogue so seriously. Tom Burkeson, determined to break out of the 'cut' mould, makes everyone indifferently but has problems finding a further dimension. Niki Gogoll is competent, says her lines with a smile and has the mystery and conviction of a *Vogue* cover. Dean Stockwell, as Bass, the City's leader, never recovers from the shock of seeing himself in his sky blue ranger suit and acts like a man in a coma, and Carrie Fisher takes her role as it were a warm-up for her own life.

George Ladd's production design ranges from imaginative to extremely tacky. While individual set-piece scenes are witty and well executed, (especially the makeup-up in the Jan-Ben) the overall "look" of the film is patchy and far less convincing than one would expect from an \$8 million budget. In particular, a lack of attention to details is most jarring. An example of this is the flashbulbs on the town. Much None of the surfaces have been convincingly aged, the costumes are ridiculous and look like they were bought the day before, even the best sets are bland now. All of these details make the authenticity of the art.

The only areas which come away unaffected are reference ones such as the cinematography, the special effects, make-up, and sound. It is a shame that these underappreciated departments will probably not get the attention they deserve.

Tianjin



THE HEAD MY VOICE BROKE - Laura
Carrigan

• PRICK UP YOUR EARS

Ken Orton was on the crest of a wave — his second play *Last Exit* had only recently won the 1967 Evening Standard and *Piggy And Roger* Best Play of the Year — when his lover of 13 years, Kenneth Halliwell, bludgeoned him to death with a hammer. An exotic gay love story gone wrong; and one of the more profound losses random British theatre has had to sustain.

It's a substantial tribute to those who have made the film of Orton's life (or death) that they have not been afraid to be frank, without ever returning us to the sort of sleazy and opportunistic sexual tension on which *Faulkner* has recently been subjected. The film is, from the point of view, a model of its kind.

It's also witty and ambiguous. It ponders the choices and contradictions of life and art, yet never labours these themes. A difficult film to make, though you'd hardly notice watching the soft version it has been given by director Stephen Frears and his team. A bit of the success rests with Alan Bennett's masterly screenplay, 10 years on the making.

Orton grew up in boozing working-class suburbs in northern Lancashire (as did Frears, considerably). His mother pushed him to become something, but going down to London on a scholarship to London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art was not what she expected. He was a boy with nothing much to offer swinging London in its heyday but talent.

Normally that is not quite enough, in a place where class and connections still count for a lot. Orton's bold play was to turn what others saw as his shortcomings into a devastating array of weapons, which reflected what could well have been a passing not just the raw powerful nature of the age.

It was at RADA that Orton met Halliwell, also a student, but 13 years his senior. To a more young lad, Halliwell had a lot in offer, besides the small bodies they shared for the duration of their relationship. Both adored with poetic imagination, they set to re-writing novels, drafting theory books, and creating a manual from images cut out of those books which covered a whole wall in their tiny room.

They went to jail for stealing and defacing the books, caught in a manner befitting one of Orton's best scenes. Such moments are handled boldly in the film, Frears lifting the style a little higher than the rest of the film — bringing in-life scenes another filmmaker might have been happy merely to describe.

There was for a long time a totally enclosed world, where Halliwell treated education and art for human contact. Trouble started when Jon's writing began to attract attention. Or Ken and

Joe's, as Halliwell would have had it — but that's not how many others saw it. Piggy Kausay, a leading agent, spotted the talent, and from that moment Halliwell's life was reduced to shadow. It was the women, and the daily humiliations which went with it, which probably drove Halliwell to the brink and beyond.

In an interesting writerly stroke, Beaton explores the life of the story in a subplot. Biographer John Lahr, played by Wallace Shawn (with some way his wife who helps out but is never recognised either).

In other ways, Beaton works boldly to reduce the swelling crowded world of actress London to a few key, cinematically manageable people.

In an equally inspired stroke, Frears casts Gary Oldman as Joe — Oldman having lost so successfully in other spots ("rental" role, *Dot*, in *Sad And Angry*). It's another superb portrayal, cocky, relaxed, always on the edge of implosion — what a great way to represent Orton's subtractive way of life.

One can see why Alfred Molina might have been cast in the Halliwell role. Not just appealing, he brings with him a sort of European sensibility. Halliwell was formal, different, far for some reason, and all due respect to the actor, the writing doesn't quite come off. Some thing must have bound these two men together — yet, on the screen, one never manages to find out exactly what. Perhaps they simply, in the words of

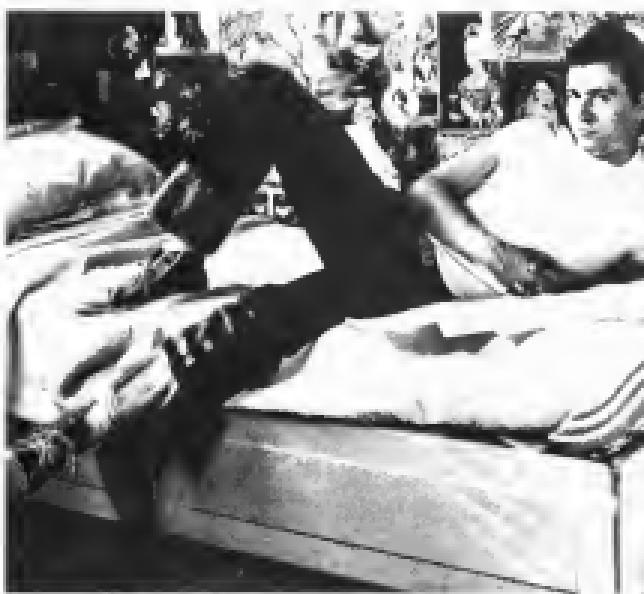
Freud, just don't touch enough.

While the film undoubtedly avoids cliché, Molina's Europeanness seems to give rise to a situation where, without much else to go by, one sometimes forgets that it's actress London. One would hardly suspect Frears would ever look such an issue carefully, given the trouble he went to and success he had in showing a different London in his previous film, the delightful, powerful, *Amy* (*Beautiful Losers*).

This time again, there's the wit and whacky, the eye for detail, the precise intelligence, and what looks very much like a genuine care for the subject. There's also, within the current tradition of British writers, more eccentric, avowally macho to the dismantling itself. Especially the way one suddenly finds oneself, just occasionally, suddenly into what looks and feels very much like a scene in one of Orton's own plays. And this up, not just life, but other art too.

James Whelan

PRICK UP YOUR EARS (1989) Directed by Stephen Frears. Produced by Michael Balcon, Repertoire, Alan Barlow. Based on the biography by Jerry Levy. Director of photography: Oliver Dodds. Production designer: Hugo Lluch. Stylist: Monica Morris. Music: Shirley Murier. Editor: Alan Hunter. Cast: Gary Oldman (Ken Orton), Alfred Molina (Peter Halliwell), Vicki Michelle (Peggy Kausay), Michael Gambon (John Lahr), John Gielgud (Peter Cushing), Frances Barber (Laurie Orton), James Cagney (Stephen Frears). Also: Anna Karenina. Production company: Chameleons International, in association with British Film Institute/Park International. Distributor: Odeon. Rating: T12 certificate. Great Britain (1989)



PRICK UP YOUR EARS: Gary Oldman



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• INNERSPACE • THE PICK-UP ARTIST

There are a few good reasons for condemning Joe Dante's *Annie Hall* and James Toback's *The Pick-Up Artist* to the *out* review. Firstly, both are less successful works by directors who are always fascinating and have at least one in their careers that has produced brilliant, unforgettable films (*Gremlins* and *Playboy* respectively). Both projects can be imagined as having once been wilder, tougher, less compromised projects — subject to the same film industry forces that shift. *The Color Of Money* from Scorsese or *The Untouchables* from De Palma. And becoming behind each of those new *Mans*, at the dark heart of compromise, is a powerful, charismatic producer figure — Steven Spielberg for *Annie* and Warren Beatty for *Toback*. (Spielberg's name does not appear in the credits of *The Pick-Up Artist* but his decisive role in the production is colourfully outlined in David Thomson's *Beatty* biography to be previewed in the next issue.)

Annie poses one in seriously wonder whether there is anything productive in the Spielberg-Dante partnership beyond the cut-off wonder of *Gremlins* — a film which is, after all, as much anti-Spielberg as it is exaltative of his art and craft. Dante seems now very much the laser, the self-doubt, in orientation; Spielberg is a sad case — as far from the radical, sleekly, innovative potential of Dante's filmmaking as can be imagined. After *Gremlins*, Dante spoke of his wish to go further into the "weird", unconventional aspects of film history (see *Posses* 63, July-August 1985). Dante filmologists know precisely what kind of weird he's talking about: early *Mad* magazine, the Warner Brothers cartoons of Tex Avery or Chuck Jones, macabre Jerry Lewis. Everyone held on the defiance promise of being the ultimate *Burke* (refers to a mohawk-haired live-action cartoon about the human body both inside and out, and the transgression of its limits).

So much for high *Innervision*. *Annie* takes over the old *Fantastic Voyage*

personas of our person in a space craft. (Dennis Quaid) ministerialised inside another persona (Martin Sheen). Making sense of even the basic fictional premise of the film beyond this point poses considerable problems. It hangs all over the place, trying out one possible (Quaid/Sheen) relation and then another. For the most part, it's not a film about the body at all — except for one freakish, delicious moment of bodily transformation — but more simply one about consciousness, with Quaid acting here as Sheen's ego in id (operating on his emotional development), and there as his superego (try, don't look at my godforsaken life there!). However, whenever the plot requires it, Quaid is suddenly able to completely program and manipulate Sheen's body (prompting up his whereabouts on the computer board).

Throughout, the film goes to strenuous lengths — and here one must easily suspect the hand of Spielberg — to avoid anything even slightly sly, sharp, and/or erotic inside the landscapes of the human body: genitalia said to be employed as the most "unified" backdrop of affection for the big action scenes.

As usual with Dante, attempts at conversational character patches break very badly — and this is a film which starts on an interminable attempt to set up Quaid's single-but-childless status along with the general communal consciousness of the film (identity, trust, integrity, self-discovery, compromise).

[None of this, nor would this in any way, is Dante's business. Maybe he knows it.] The other big moment of the film — when Quaid enters his girlfriend's body via Sheen's mouth (huh?) and discovers the factors of his unborn child — would be, if heartfelt, extraordinary. Sheen seems to throw it out of his system unharmed, leaving half the audience scratching its collective head. *Annie* is full of palely marginal mutations for the film. Dante obviously wants to make a laboratory exhibit named *Boag*, a cameo by Chuck Jones, an elaborate but wasted gag involving releases reduced to piggy size. Dante eventually settles for a few nice touches that are more like French Tickles than Tex Avery, such as the penultimate moment when Sheen closes three sub-plots in seven words. But these jokes amount to cold comfort. Maybe Dante needs to get back with former colleagues Roger Corman, John Snyder, Allan Arkush . . .

The *Pick-Up Artist* is an altogether bigger, if somewhat similarly uncertain, affair. This film started out about six years ago as — believe it or not — a drama about "a man who wants to fuck every woman but who still loves with his mother". On departing this in 1981, David Thomson (in his book *Screenplay*) remarked that "Toback might be the Glazebrook to reveal how much the American male longs to screw his mother. Wouldn't that have to be an underground picture?" As it turns out,

The Pick-Up Artist is certainly no underground picture. The mind boggles as to the intervening ramifications and revisions on that initial script — a project entirely in line with the tortured, narcissistic angst held out in every other Toback film (*The Gambler* which he only wrote, and then *Players*, *Lawn And Memory* and *Exposed*). In the film as far developed, the mother has metamorphosed into a grandmother, and any sexual tension between her and the 20-year-old hero is entirely absent. In fact, the old dame seems to be still happily pursuing her own, warmly independent love life. If this is a James Toback film, then Toback must be a changed man.

Actually, it's hard to tell how sincere or how calculatedly "authentic" Toback is being holding this film. Every observable Toback trait is there, unabated: alcohol, gambling, vicious competition, pathological double binds, driven etc. Yet, instead of being compounded all into the main character (who is always a Toback stand-in), here the traits are spread around, shared, worked through without any particularly violent catharsis for the hero (Robert Downey, Jr.) maniacism, the woman he meets (Molly Ringwald) gullibility, her father (Barney Hopper) drunk, something of the classlessness. Toback under-estimated. Double margin flingers in the plot — Harvey Keitel as the criminal "father" who must be transgressed in order that the hero will be transformed from his shadow — but here, for the first time, the woman is not an object, she has something to say and respond. (A distinct advance on *Exposed* where Toback merely floated his narrative formation upon a female form.)

I haven't mentioned that *The Pick-Up Artist* is a comedy; at least, I think it's meant to be so. Toback's humor has previously always been of the particularly grim, dark kind; here he goes on the trend of light-as-light films trying to take teen stars (like Ringwald) and teen movie styles into a new genre, of "young adulthood". Toback appears (I) at ease with both a hero not his own age, and the mechanics of light comedy. This is where some of the uncertainties and



THE PICK-UP ARTIST: Robert Downey and Molly Ringwald

confusing overlaps appear why must this have been an obligatory Tolkaek hero with a loss for day-sleep status? Many of the ongoing comic premises — such as Dowsery and his best friend Dungey Aduka never stopping to imagine that Hagger is Raugnold's father — are delivered heavily and somewhat unconvincingly (Tolkaek is neither a Bush Ranger nor a John Wayne with that material). When Tolkaek tries to flip his typical signature norms — such as when the falling hero tries to climb his way out of a tight spot, and fails miserably (see *Finger*) — into positive, happy, triumphant moments, it only half works.

Given these problems (and what I feel is the misreading of Donway, who never quite finds the right tone for the ride), there is a lot of good news in *The Prof-Cop*: about Tobak's filmic style has previously lumbered from amateurish experiment (the relentless long takes in *Requiem*) to flat iteration (*One and Money*). He's discovered some fine new angles here, in particular a amazingly expressive use of locations (subways, car parks, hotels, Coney Island). When he can bear to tear the same old drop-top off the committee, Tobak invents some startling image-sound rhythms and relations involving (amongst other things) rap and funk music. Thuswise, Tobak explores with full strength what has always been his most unique interest — the relations of comic characters to their cultures, highly individualized parents — and achieves an affinity with the most complex ideas of the great 1960s romantic comedies. In this regard *The Prof-Cop* outshines both McCarey — the two principal characters have as both the screen

members nothing more than something — and give up something, finding the mid-point between playing too much and not being able to play enough — and Coker. What with Molly Ringwald having to move beyond a certain frigid emotional (not sexual) reserve, and the weirdish relationship with a loving (just tyrannical) parent — The Pick-Up Artist is a little like Tolstoy's version of *The Philadelphia Story*. You don't believe me? Well, check it out — and pay strict attention to that grandmother.

Indirect Methods



THE HISTORICAL METHODS OF THE ROMAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

**I'VE HEARD THE
MERMAIDS SINGING**

In her future career, *The Blood* The Mermaid, singer, writer and director Patricia Resnick considers as to Poly (Shirley McCarthy). She's quirky, a kind of urban innocent whose downbeat, ingenuous love and charming naivety remind us of *Goodbye, Darkness*.

In a voice-taped 'documentary style' confessional, Polly addresses the audience. She introduces the characters and narrates the events.

Polly describes herself as a "gal on the go", but averages a journey without a destination. She has neither ambition nor direction and, despite working as a secretary, is not the kind that persists by being described as "organizationally impaired". She's your bumbling happy go lucky type who prefers canined pets to masha and who when asked (as a Japanese restauranteur) what she wants does little more than "A kotsu".

On being interviewed for a secretarial position, Polly agrees to be used rather than reemployed. She teams up with Gabrielle St-Pierre (Paula Radcliffe).

and white footage, Polly flits, walks on water, hears the mermaids singing and even abandons Calaisville with her **SPRING 2002**

Although eloquent in discussing art, Gabriella fears that she is unable to create it. But Polly, when shown some of her work, is傾ded over, and in an attempt to rid Gabriella of her self-doubt, gives one of the paintings and shows it to a critic. The Critic's words are to make Gabriella realize, inspired by the sequence of events, Polly — a closet photographer — needs Gabriella's name for her photographs under a pseudonym. The Critic demands that as "the true rock star," without payment, Polly is devastated. She burns her portfolio and destroys the camera. Later, she discovers that the woman she has worshipped is a fraud, and her interest in photography returns.

On a thematic level the film strings together the cycles, but often fails to pursue a discrete stage of engraving images.

Roscoes drawn analogies between Christianity (theology), High Art and the propensity for sinosity. Art is revered & housed in "The Church". Galatea St. Peter (Archangel Gabriel/St Peter) is the manager/interpreter of the "word" in incarnation (Mary Joseph) the masses (Poly).

Implicit in these situations is an assumption of the mechanics of belief, the status of knowledge. For instance, there are three separable units of belief that increase throughout the film — visual address, the black and white sequence, central message — but none of them is ever allowed to assume a higher or more secure status of certainty. When *Citizen Kane* is completed, we're

In order to escape the relative tedium of her own life, Polly slips into and out of a world of "fancy." In this world, which is delineated by granular black

► The implications for the activity of criticism itself are clear.

In numerous ways the film is emphatically generic. As critic, artist and photographer, the three women are vehicles of the film's "look". By positioning Poly as the narrator relating her experience, the audience adopts her point of view. The film suggests that women are the passive recipients of the male gaze, that the spectator is, or should identify with a male, is undermined.

The film furthermore overturns and inverts patriarchal discourses present in the tradition of Religion and Art. Gehrard St Peter replaces St Peter. Mary Joseph suggests an exclusively female identity in the representation of (holy) family. Lesbian sexuality replaces the dominance of male sexuality inherent in the idea and representation of the love of God/Christ for "Mankind".

The film makes other references to the representation of women in certain Roman religious iconography as well as to different "types", to locate them in Nature rather than Culture. While reporting the patriarchal arrangement of heterosexuality, she does so despite heterosexuality in stylized European fashion. But in this situation, Rosanna is careful not to replace conventional titillating pleasure systems. She declines to represent women as isolated, sexualised and on display, so that her heterosexuality and thereby reduce it to a specific.

The style of the film is relatively whimsical, as most occasionally offered. The performances are slight and the film's tone, particularly insofar as the way that it defuses complex issues in an accessible fashion. The film sometimes falls into unnecessary conundrums, and some may find the feelings and atmosphere contrived. It's a film, however, that's likely to both engage and charm.

Susanna Hechtling

REVIEWED THE MORMONS (1985) Directed by Peter Bogdanovich. Screenplay: Don Haig. Producers: Robert Rosenblatt, Michael S. Rosenblatt. Story: Robert Rosenblatt. Cinematography: Robert L. Katz. Editors: Mark Mainous, Carl Sherrill, McCarthy. Music: Mark Mainous. Cast: Warren Beatty, Diane Keaton, Paul Shaffer, Peter Fonda, Blythe Danner, McCarthy, Diane Keaton, John Goodman, Dennis Hopper. (American, 1985). Period: Modern (1985). Production company: The production Distributor: A2 Pictures. In colour. Duration: 102'

• ISHTAR

In spite of the scorn it has received, Diane Mayo's *Ishtar* should be the premise for some celebration. For with subtle intelligence (and high risk finance), Diane relates back to a "lesser" tradition of Hollywood comedy based consistently throughout the thirties, forties and fifties. In comparison to the sophisticated, screwball or romantic comedies of the same period it is a seemingly unorthodox and no doubt neglected strand of comedy which we can call, with a few reservations, the bawdy comedy. Abbott and Costello, Hope and



ISHTAR: Hoffman and Beatty in a sequined sequence

Grosby, Lewis and Martin. Why thus neglect has taken place should not be a cause for lament but an opportunity to speculate why this *ishtara* is "on the beach" (with the proviso, of course, that something can be said about its comic underpinnings).

But such has been the state of affairs that the bawdy comedy is not only "on the beach" but appears as an aberration within more "legitimate" forms of film comedy. The comic genius of Lowe, for instance, is generally considered to emerge after 1926, and therefore post-Martin (with the exception of some Taubin-directed comedies) where Lowe can be more clearly appreciated as the product of the silent comic. Hope, if considered at all, could not rely on the *Road* pictures for comic solace, quasi the reverse, while Abbott and Costello barely rate a mention. Their status to have been an undervalued life-sapping which displaces the bawdy comedy from the "serious" of film comedy to the "trivial" of entertainment, with the fact of their trivialisation (*The Road To Abbott And Costello After*) adding to this conception.

If, only for expediency's sake, we rate Kurosawa's two dominant modes of American film comedy as — "the individual act of keeping with society" and "the man versus woman mode" — then we can see that while the bawdy comedy shares in both, it belongs to neither. And for the comic writers mentioned here, it is never all that clear how the bawdy comedy — the extension of the roisterous or nightclubs routine — is integrated into film. It is likely that the film's "strange" would have been elaborations of the nightclubs act (their [shared] bare) audiences nothing more than supporters for a string of one-liners. And it's therefore likely that the bawdy comedy would have been regarded as separate, marginal and provincial, bearing little relation to the development of film

comedy in Kurosawa's sense.

But the bawdy comedy is a hybrid form, like most other comic forms. What needs to go unnoticed is that the nightclubs routine was easily assimilated into film through popular self-referencing mechanisms, even direct address. The playfulness of the nightclubs act allowed for calculated playfulness with the medium. Take, for example, Bob Hope's refusal to end *The Road To Riches* by pushing "The End" off the screen, and his generalists — "Call the producer!", "Call the waterworks!" — at the sight of Bang exiting the picture, not only with Dorothy Lamour but Jane Russell as a blonde. Even self-referentiality has never been as direct as in this case; it cannot be ignored at least to propose that film comedy, in most of its varied guises, strives to integrate its subject matter with an understanding of the medium and what can be done with the medium, for transference is never pure and simple.

This provides a good enough point to begin to talk about *Ishtar*, for everything is to tip from that it's likely to be raised as misinterpreted. Centring on the two co-stars, Warren Beatty and Diane Hoffman, and their respective characters, Lyle Rogers and Clark Clarke, it seems inevitable *Ishtar* will at first offend, given the premise of two undesirable women playing two object lessons. As Andrew Sarris puts it in the *Pell-mell*, Hoffman and Beatty relish in an indirect form of self-congratulation for having become big stars that makes fun of all the poor wretches in the world who haven't. But Diane doesn't ask of the audience to believe in Beatty and Hoffman as the down-and-out unassuming men of Rogers and Clarke. It's recognizable *Abbot*, rather, isn't it? embroiling, it's humouring, it's bantering it up to the point where what shown through is the authority of the spectacle of women playing losers.

From that angle then, there aren't two central characters but four. There is someone called Warren Beatty who bears little relation to Rogers, and someone called Diana Hoffman who equally bears little relation to Clarke. This can be more readily discerned at the extremes playing against partners, especially as regards Beatty. Rogers is awkward and sexually naive (more amateur in Beatty as *womanizer*, while the rock-star, Hawk, managing to succeed with women, may fit Clarke but not Hoffman (at least in playing against co-star Beatty). Like the audience members who stare with mouths agape at the unlikelihood of the team's eighth-best, a "writing suspension of disbelief" is something *Hawk* refuses to engage in, it's this whole shuffling scenario of (de)disentangling that May is definitely aware of. Hence, the relevance of the Rogers and Clarke case which both opens and closes the film — "Taking the truth can be dangerous business".

The buddy comedy ends so full of flavor by the early scenes (although a move or less hardy went through the inevitable was the team of Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau) for, of course, the new morality of the status goes cause to re-sharpen the romantic comedy along new and even daring lines, leaving the buddy comedy to sever the partnership or, more precisely, shift ground — to the jokes, for instance.

It is in this context that Jerry Lewis' *The Nutty Professor* (1963) gets the buddy comedy through the wringer, going insight into the darker chemistry between bickering friend that also involves rivalry, mistrust and backstabbing.

It is worth mentioning at this time Elmer May's earlier film *Nicky and Nelly*, which uses a recognizable cast of sorts, John Goodman and Peter Falk. In a sense, *Nicky and Nelly* could be described as a sophomore buddy comedy which shows what happens when the loser of the team finally gets the upper hand. The two central characters are small-time crooks and long-time friends. Goodman's Nicky is the winner but out of favour with the girls, and in hiding, while Falk's Nelly is the loser, the bane of Nicky's past, but the one who is setting Nicky up for a fall. When Nelly tricks Nicky, "Do you think I'm finger-painting you?", to measure Nicky of his trust, the sad truth is not so much that he is, but that he is going to go through with it to an ultimate conclusion — Nelly barricading the door as Nicky takes the bat on Nelly's door step.

Bad is always finger-ing Lou, Big is always finger-ing Bob, and Bad is always trying to finger Big but ends up finger-ing himself, and Dean finger-Jerry but only to the point where he realizes he needs Jerry more than he knew, and again that Jerry needs Dean. *Nicky and Nelly*, in this sense, could be about the straightman getting his come-uppance

after, then, comes to us via the same route. But if *Ajax* does not manage to exorcise the figure of the straightman, it does manage to devalue and destabilize this figure.

Ajax is in this respect three or four moves away from the *Hawk-Crofty Road* picture (as closest companion), where it doesn't just involve them, it resonates their terms. When the comic (but also) Ajax character (the Dorothy Lamour of *Ajax*), with tears in her eyes, admits by the end of the film to loving both men, there's been a whole inverted process the straightman (and by association the lover) has gone through for her to be able to say that.

"Most guys live lives of quiet desperation. Not us," is something Clarke tells Rogers in examining their friendship. Both are losers, but between them Clarke is definitely perceived as the straightman, and the dominant figure of the two. There are a number of instances which establish this. A running gag early on in the film is where, with each and every proposal or suggestion made by the two, Rogers follows Clarke's lead by responding with, "Me too." Another scene has Clarke attempting to correct Rogers' pronoun usage of "attack", which he pronounces "attack". And, not only is Clarke the weenster, he is also the decision-maker — it's he who assumes the responsibility of deciding whether to take the booking in Mexico over the less lucrative deal in Honduras.

But it's in the nature of the film to be somehow self-effacing. The sequence which precedes Clarke's descent into an extraordinary flashback which begins by fading out with Rogers, and concludes by fading in with Clarke. It seems Clarke is always taking the lead, and taking it away from Rogers. The flashback, however, reveals an important aspect of their friendship — a scene has Clarke on the ledge of his apartment building in a terrible suicide attempt just after his admission to Rogers that he is really a failure, even with women. Out on the ledge, Rogers physically takes support of Clarke, has explained, "Don't you understand it takes a lot of nerve to have anything at your age? Most guys would say, 'The hell with it.' You say, 'I'd rather have nothing than settle for less!'" End of flashback, and Rogers and Clarke are Morocco bound.

If Clarke is the decision-maker, Rogers is the logician and the one who provides the sense of flow. Rogers explains why women are readily attracted to Clarke: "It's because of your size, ever heard of a tall sports car?" This is the sense of the closed material, and it's this kind of response which makes sense, most emphatically for Clarke rather than Rogers, for Clarke would suffer the indignity of realising he is a loser.

We can divide *Ajax* equally into its New York segment, on the one hand, and, on the other, its Indian segment,

and it's this progression that the New York segment is dominated by and belongs to Clarke, when the Indian segment must certainly belong to Rogers. A general scene occurs after the pair are duped — by Adjan's revolutionary group and the CIA — into taking to the desert with a blind camel. The scene repeats the central gag as the pair stand in the wide expanse of the desert, a CIA helicopter demands for the kill, but when the pair finally realize who's finger-ganging Clarke, in desperation, Rogers asks about the camel. "He'd rather just sit there and get shot!" Rogers replies. "Actually, I kind of admire that." To which Clarke adds, "Me too." That, in the film's subtle counterpointing, is it's actually Rogers who has taken the lead, as further reinforced when he happily exclaims, "That ain't living lives of quiet desperation!" as a typical CIA assassination attempt is met by the pair armed and fighting back, and this time with Adjan at their side. If both are losers then they're also both winners, hence the importance and condition of Adjan's admissions to loving both of them is the condition of destabilizing Clarke's confidence — not bringing him down necessarily, but raising him to Rogers' level. That, a film that can say you're a winner even if you're a loser isn't all that bad, even if it took \$90 million to say it.

It's ironic, however, that within the terms outlined, it's Rogers that buys a



GENTAR: Hoffman, Beatty and the blind camel

• and kind a blind carried into the desert, but then again, when Clarke collapses in the desert, a sense of violence leaves and peace returns around him — and that for a man whose nickname is Hawk.

Riffraff Captain

FULL METAL JACKET Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Screenplay by Stanley Kubrick. Story by Kubrick, Peter Biziou, Fredric March and Michael Tucci. Cinematography by John M. Jackson. Art direction by William Clement. Editors: John M. Jackson, Robert Krueger. Production designer: John M. Jackson. Music: Jerry Goldsmith. Cast: Marlon Brando, Lee Evans, Milt Hinton, Jim Hutton, Ernest Borgnine, R. Lee Ermey, Adam Douglas, Tom Skerritt, Gary Puckett, Eddie Egan. Produced by Stanley Kubrick. Distributed by Columbia Pictures. Running time: 140 mins. (US, 1977)

• FULL METAL JACKET

Stanley Kubrick ends *Full Metal Jacket* with Nick Nolte singing "Pura K Black" as the final credits roll. Only then does his theme become clear that men destroy each other when they play the game in desecration. From the first image of the new recruits being shorn of hair and individuality we watch the breakdown of American boys and their reconversion into killing machines in "the Island", the Marine Corps training galley. At one stage the recruits march around in their underwear, a rifle in one hand and their genitals grasped in the other, chanting, "This is my ride, this is my gun, not us for killing, not us for fun." The links between sex and battle have rarely been as explicit.

Gunny Sergeant Hartman (Lee Ermey) drills the platoon to Marine Corps songs which set up the whole anti-war dichotomy:

Maria and Pugs were lying in bed
Maria rolled over this is what she said
Ho Chi Minh is a son of a bitch
Got the blue balls, crabs and the seven
year itch

The connection is made visually when the film's narrator, Joker (Matthew Modine), sees below himself, Cowboy (Adam Howard) mapping out the route: black. Joker quips, "I want to stick my route in your ass. What do you take in route?" Cowboy "What do you go?" Cha ta talkers having targets on the rifle range. In the second half of the film, Joker meets Cowboy in Hartman's barracks, "Gassing away," Joker. "Only your ass?" Cowboy "Well better my ass than my mother."

The claustrophobic first hour of the film has the jagged pulse of all total instruments — precise, rhythmic, harpoon-like military training camps are all physically unchangeable, like base tuba and snarling of savagery.

The symmetrical second half of the film follows Joker into the purgatory of the Tet offensive, in the burning city of Hué. Kubrick here forges the lush and psychedelic colours of the tropics for washed out, metallic, grey skin which are the same colour as the bodies of the dead.

Joker, drenched and sardonic, wears a peace sign and his helmet bears the words "Born to kill". An annoyed colonel demands an explanation, and Joker tells him that it stands for "the duality of war. You know, the Jungian thing."

The duality which both Joker and Kubrick love is that while condensing the brutality of war, they are fascinated by it. A war photographer in Vietnam was asked why his photos seemed so glamorous. He replied that trying to take the glamour out of war was like trying to make the glamour out of sex. The concern is attached to action, not to philosophical argument.

As the disturbing images of war are also an adenalin fixer, so too is the poetic profanity of Gunnery Sergeant Hartman is both brutal and funny. He destroys a recruit with his inventive and evil laugh. "You think objectives [like old people] fuck I'm going to rip your balls off as you can't concentrate the rest of the human race."

We do not see a woman in the first half of the film. The only references to women are obscene. In the second half we meet three who are prostitutes and one is the sniper who kills Hartman, Doc and Crowley. We only discover the sex of this angel of death in the penultimate scene of the film, when she is wounded. Joker shoots her to put her out of misery. We see his last twisted, noorganic sexual act as he pulls the trigger. Cut to Marines marching past the blissing backdrop of Hartman, singing set Hartman's Marine Corps drums but the Mickey Mouse Club song "Come along and join the fun with all the family." "Yourselves from Joker." "My thoughts drift back to the good homecoming fuck with Mary Jane Rothstein."

By concentrating on war as trauma denied, defused and deflected, Kubrick has tried again to explore the wider political issues. He casts returning with a film crew covering during a fall in the battle to make a few points. The soldiers spot the cameras and yell, "Vietnam the movie! We'll let the gods play the Indians."

John Wayne is the point of reference, here of caucasian Saturday afternoons at the movies. But as one of the black Marines complains, "We get killed for these people and they don't appreciate it." Joker goes at the women's back house and explains, deadpan, "I wanted to go to some South East Asia and just keep harassing and tantalizing people and tell them 'I wanted to be the first bullet on my black to get a confirmed kill.'

Vietnam has stared filmmakers to make use of as drama. It was the first fully televised war, and its images are etched on the modern consciousness, but a decade after the Vietnamese army defeated the American war machine, filmmakers are still trying to come to terms with the subject. *The Deer Hunter*, *Apocalypse Now* and *Platoon* all continued

the sequence but were ultimately disappearing. Kubrick used all that needs to be said about nationalism in *Full Metal Jacket*. In *Full Metal Jacket* his final parting shot of everything was taken us back to *Flerry Lyons* and the lines of soldiers, shoulder to shoulder, marching to their deaths, ranks unswerving.

In *Full Metal Jacket*, the Marines strafe in position with the sounds of Walk Disney on their lips and the thought that the dead know only that it is better to be alive. As the US falls towards another war in Central America, Kubrick offers only the chapter of a later day General.

Christopher Thompson

FULL METAL JACKET Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Executive producer: Peter Biziou. Associate producer: Michael L. Fierman. Casting: John M. Jackson. Music: Jerry Goldsmith. Sound: Michael Dickey. Director of photography: Roger Deakins. Score: John Williams. Music: Production designer: John M. Jackson. Special effects: Tom McMurtry. Costumes: Joie R. Johnson. Editor: John M. Jackson. Visual effects: Joseph Kosma. Sound: David P. Webb. Art director: Lee Evans. Original score: Gunnery Sergeant Hartman. Donen Harmonic. Original: Adam Rogers. Costumes: Steven Major. Hair and makeup: Pauline. Production design: John M. Jackson. Music: Roger Deakins. Running time: 140 mins. (USA, 1977)

• RECENT RELEASES

A Supplementary Guide

November

- *These For The Road* (Village Roadshow). *Matador* (Hyper).
- *Hotel Colombe* (Filmap).
- *The Squatters* (Fox Columbus).
- *Lady Browne* (Village Roadshow).
- *Evil Dead II* (Hyper).
- *Body Snatchers* (Filmap).
- *Cherry 2000* (Village Roadshow).
- *The Living Daylights* (Cavif).
- *Rock To The Roots* (UFA).
- *Hearts Of Fire* (Village Roadshow).
- *Memphis Hill* (Filmap).
- *Who's That Girl* (Village Roadshow).
- *The Last Emperor* (Fox Columbus).
- *Big Shots* (Village Roadshow).
- *With Love To The Person Next To Me* (AFI).
- *The Funeral* (Raven).
- *The Magic Toyshop* (AFI).
- *The Right Hand Man* (Greater Union).
- *Nazca Dog Source* (Greater Union).
- *Kamikaze* (Hyper/Fremantle).

December

- *Spaceballs* (Hyper).
- *Just The Wrong* (UFA).
- *A Night On The Town* (Village Roadshow).
- *The Princess Bride* (Filmap).
- *Harry & The Hendersons* (UFA).
- *Revenge Of The Nerds 3* (Fox Columbus).
- *Dark Eyes* (Filmap).
- *Leonard Part 6* (Fox Columbus).
- *Phantom, Tintin And Asterix* (UFA).
- *Three Minutes From The Train* (Village Roadshow).
- *Keep The Homefront* (Village Roadshow).
- *High You Were Here* (Warner Union).
- *Fried Avocados* (AFI).
- *The Party* (AFI).
- *Snowball School* (UFA).
- *Star, Star And Star, Too* (New Vision).
- *The Good Father* (New Vision).
- *Salvation* (New Vision).
- *Tropicana* (Hyper).
- *The Black Canada Incident* (Raven).
- *Belly Of An Architect* (Hyper/Fremantle).
- *Supernova IV* (Hyper).
- *Music In Heaven* (Village Roadshow).

FILMWEST

- Equipment Rental
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SHORTS CI

WE have survived the white man's world and the torment and the horrors of it. WE have survived the white man's world and you know you can't change that.

So wrote Bert Willoughby, Aborigines' missionary and shaman. Far to the back of the band that sang those words, No Fixed Address. They are words that were appropriate to *How The West Was Lost*, a documentary that identifies a struggle in the Pilbara, in central Western Australia, that has seen Aboriginal people turn their backs on the white man's world - while using the tools that would have to offer.

Indeed, it is the fact that Aboriginals took industrial action and withheld their labour from cattle stations in 1946 that makes the film a remarkable testament to the people who were involved in a campaign for human rights conditions and their own dignity.

Central to it all was Don McLeod, a remarkable white character who once took a black person to hospital and thus earned the respect of the Aborigines. He led the campaign, calling hundreds of Aborigines to regular meetings of workers in stations so that strike action would be co-ordinated and sympathetic on a world democratic scale.

By going re-enacted in walkabout interviews and sometimes re-creations, the film gives a major industrial event into the collective history of Australia. And this is necessary for an Australia that is generally ignorant of history, particularly by the history of remote regions and the native inhabitants.

It is a film that tries to do justice to the issue and the people, a people whose values have little in common with the dominant responsibility of middle-class Australian capitalism and whose history and culture is as old as the earth itself.

Director David Noakes, who has worked with Aborigines before on the film *Two Lives*, was aware of this burden. The conflict within a Country that really doesn't exist - a country where a film about Aborigines is made knowing that audiences will be unmoved, response muted and impact negligible. Such a film, such a committed documentary, has been described as a campaign film. But if it is a campaign, it is one fought with individuals and these are already evident in *How The West Was Lost*.

If Aboriginal culture is primarily



HOW THE WEST WAS LOST Colin Stoebe, Jimmie and Tony Thomas point out the strike leaders

about how it is to be filmed? How is the significance of objects, which reference the prehistory of Aboriginal life to be presented? This is something that Aboriginal filmmakers can find patent to European Australians. Their significance is evident in the diary entries that hold him from the first written teacher of the continent.

The narrative line in the film is cohesive, but many meanings are left unexplained. Take for example the lines of initial elders teaching children at water in Aboriginal dialect, a wonderful development in the face of State Government plans to teach only English writing to Aboriginal children at state run schools. And all this in a school run by Aboriginal people for themselves.

But what is the impact of teaching Aboriginal writing when the culture has previously been oral?

On another level, what is the impact of capitalist relations on the Aborigines that led to the state in the first place? Was Don McLeod really doing the best possible thing by the Aborigines and their culture by putting an end to their lives in a寄居生活 after they went on strike? It probably was. The film by describing the working lives of the Aborigines counters the prevailing stereotype that Aborigines are incapable of work in a modern economy.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to see answers to these questions within the film. If they were added and

the exposure of how the story is told in the present.

It is possible that the film attempts to move into the exposure with as much forced approach to this material, when from the researcher's understanding government documents that speak on screen. Colin McLeod's recollection together with interview in talking head shots, Aboriginal people being interviewed Super 8 footage from the past shot by white concern presented in re-enactments of the events of 1946, the contrast between the small-scale mining of the striking Aborigines and the large scale 'rip and roll' method used by the companies that took over the Aborigines' mines.

But the contrasts between all these images are implicit rather than exposed as interrogated, and the content is lost in the overall message and clarity of the film suffers as a result.

The fact that Noakes made the film in co-operation with the Aboriginal people is important and gives the project added legitimacy. It gives the Aborigines a chance to tell their history in a different way from white Australians, using white Australian methods.

Perhaps the film's major contribution though is that it poses questions about our more historical documentary filmmaking and the very history it seeks to encode. And the band played. You can't change the definition of rock, you can't tell me what it is. You can't break my heart by putting me down.

In taking things that belong to me, all song lyrics by last Wednesday reported in permission or otherwise. By God.

Marcus Broth



HOW THE WEST WAS LOST The Goveley community re-enacts the 1946 protest

OVERVIEW

What's new in video censorship and video releases? PAUL KALINA looks at the parliamentary committee examining video censorship, and previews some of the latest titles in the video stores.

**IF YOU'RE
16,
you're
old
enough
to see
it!**

MY MOTHER - "I will bear Mother only because I have to know what else to call her."
MY FATHER - "Dear Doctor, always answer woman as she desires - he says. Deep 'tum deep in'?"
MYSELF - "All I know about mother what I do it a thinking."



A cross-over
adults picture for
grown-up audiences!



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ARE YOU OLD ENOUGH? Unsuitable for minors or a sleepover?

Since its inception the video market has been constantly affected by the fluctuating mood of censorship.

In 1980, only 47 feature films on video were registered with the Classification Board, but by the end of 1981 this figure had rocketed to more than 3000 imported video tapes. The unregulated nature of the video industry has thrived on the assumption that it can cater for the needs of the widest possible audience while the liberalisation point out that the ultimate gateway of video viewing should allow adults to make their own decisions about what to watch; the inexpensive and easy accessibility of video has caused much concern about potentially 'harmful' material when it can be viewed by children and minors.

In 1983, a system of censorship was proposed that would, in the words of then-chief censor Jane Stockland, "ensure maximum freedom for adults to view what they wished at the privacy of their homes" — and, at the same time, give guidance to consumers as to what they were buying or hiring — as well as place limits on what could be openly displayed or sold to children.

The aim was for a uniform and voluntary system that included a further 'X' category for sexually explicit non-violent material, while certain material, such as child pornography, bestiety, and instruction manuals for weapons, would be refused classification.

But by June 1984, the voluntary system was replaced by a compulsory system, while some states made it clear they would set aside the intended uniform system. The Commonwealth Government set up a Parliamentary Committee on Video Classification in August 1984. This committee has been superseded by a Joint Parliamentary Select

Committee on Video Material, which has been sitting for more than 2½ years and which was, at the time of writing, expected to hand down its report shortly.

The committee is comprised of 11 members, chaired by Dr Richard Klugman (ALP), Victorian, and includes conservatives such as Tasmanian Senator Shirley Walters (Liberal) and State Member for Tasmania Shirley Chevallier (Independent) on the one hand, and Victorian Labor Senator Clive Zanchetti on the other. According to Klugman, the committee has gathered submissions and evidence from various groups all over Australia. "My own view," he said, "is that much evidence has been given by people who don't know the guidelines [of censorship]." He points to the difficult distinction between explicit sex and violence in the 'X' classification, pointing out the anomaly that the 'P' rating does allow for depictions of rape. "From a rational point of view it's difficult to see why violence with implied sex is allowed when it is banned from the explicit 'X'."

Earlier this year Klugman set aside the validity of evidence submitted by the South Australian Council for Children's Film and Television. He claimed that the evidence suggesting a high level of young children watching 'P' and 'X'-rated videos was due to boasting on the part of the children. Though the question of children gaining access to unsuitable material is pertinent to the present debate, the off-the-shelf claim of children watching naughty films "at a friend's place" has long been recognised as hard to verify.

In Western Australia, legislation has already been introduced to cover two of the areas under scrutiny by the select committee. All 'P' rated titles in video libraries must now be seen to be segregated

ATTERS

from other titles. Though it is not necessary to keep these titles in a separate room, the law will certainly upset the organisation of libraries in which movies are usually placed according to genre, incorporating "R" rated movies. Of 2081 videos submitted to censorship in 1988, 382 received "R" certificates, 644 "M", 408 "PG", 580 "G", 134 "X", while 35 were refused classification.

Janet Broadland, who is presently a consultant to the film and video industry, views this measure — which will presumably make it easier to control access to "R" rated movies — as "a responsible view ... in line with Government policy." Jeannie Simpson, chief executive of VIDA (Video Industry Distributors Association), is unconcerned: "This is the best situation that could have occurred given the circumstances that prevail," she said.

During 1987, VIDA embarked on a campaign aimed at reminding both the public and video retailers of their respective responsibilities. Kits, comprising flyers, posters and stands with clearly-printed explanations of what each classification means were sent to video shops throughout Australia. Under prevailing laws it is an offence for a video retailer to lend an "R"-rated video to an underage customer. All advertisements for videos must include the censorship rating.

As many libraries — especially the smaller ones — lend tapes in boxes other than the distributor's, both cassette cases and display boxes must be labelled with the film's title and rating. Again from printed tapes, it is impossible to borrow a legitimate tape in Australia without the viewer's awareness of its content and censorship rating.

This pertains to the "X" classification as well, which is only available in shops in the Territories, and through mail-order services operating in the ACT. John Lark is president of AVIA (Adult Video Industry Association) and manager of one such distribution company. He claims that these tapes are sold directly

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON VIDEO MATERIAL TERMS OF REFERENCE

That a joint select committee, to be known as the Joint Select Committee on Video Material, be appointed to inquire into and report upon the operation of the Cinemas (Cinematograph Films) Regulations, Regulation 4A of the Cinemas (Psychotic Imports) Regulations and the ACT Classification of Publications Decree 1983 in relation to videotapes and videodiscs and/or records.

- (a) the effectiveness of such legislation to adequately control the separation, production, reproduction, sale and hire of violent, pornographic or otherwise obscene material;
- (b) whether the present classification system, as applied by the Film Classification Board, is adequate on a basis for largest and most of late works;
- (c) whether video retailers are observing the conditions of sale of the above-mentioned material (particularly in relation to children under 18 years);
- (d) whether "R" rated videos should be permitted to be displayed for sale at hire in the same area and side-by-side with "G", "PG" and "M" classifications and, if so, what restrictions should be imposed on the display of "R" rated material;
- (e) whether Regulation 4A of the Cinemas (Psychotic Imports) Regulations is adequate in identifying categories of prohibited violence and operating effectively in preventing the importation of videocassettes featuring within the prohibited categories;
- (f) examine the extent to which videotapes containing pornography and violent material are available to the community in general;
- (g) whether children under the age of 18 years are gaining access to videotapes/tapes containing violent, pornographic or otherwise obscene material;
- (h) whether the ACT Classification of Publications Decree 1983 should be amended to make it an offence for persons purchasing or hiring a non-censorship classified video "R" to show, offer or negligently permit children to view such material;
- (i) whether the sale, hire, distribution or exhibition of films and videotapes/tapes that would, under existing laws, be accorded a classification above "R" should be made unlawful;
- (j) whether cinemas should be permitted to screen for paid exhibition material classified above "R" subject to protection from entry of persons under the age of 18 years;
- (k) whether films which would merit a classification above "R" are being produced in Australia and if so whether Australian men and women are adequately protected by existing law from exposure to such such films; and
- (l) the likely effects upon people, especially children, of exposure to violent, pornographic or otherwise obscene material.



DRAMAS OF PASSION: As censorship standards change

to the public; not retailers, and that birthdates, bankcard numbers and drivers' licences are used to check customers' ages. As these tapes are often sent CCO identification must be provided when the tape is collected. Lark says, "It is not a small market and cannot be swept under the carpet. It is an industry that needs to be internally policed and controlled." Thus, he maintains, cannot happen if it is outlawed. As a timely example he points to current legal proceedings against a dealer allegedly trafficking in unclassified tapes who faces severe penalties of \$10,000 per tape.

According to Dr Paul Wilson, assistant director at the Australian Institute of Criminology, the hire of 'X' rated videos accounts for a mere seven or eight per cent of the ACT rental. His members in a newspaper report that the findings of videos incorporating violence were not getting through the system. He is quoted as saying that there was no "convincing ethnological or psychological evidence" to demonstrate that exposure to sexually explicit material produced measurable harm to society.

In his submission to the Senate Select Committee, the Institute of Criminology stated "It is the view of the

Australian Institute of Criminology ... that the available evidence cannot be said to establish in general terms a causative link between 'pornography' and media violence on the one hand, and sex offences and violent offences on the other. The statistical data are too flat and the intervening variables too numerous."

It is generally agreed however that the primary focus at present is on the level of violence permitted in films bearing an 'R' rating. Recently, Attorney-General Lionel Bowen said, "I think the community is probably more worried about 'R' rated films than 'X' rated films at the moment because there is more violence in the 'R' rated films."

The committee is being closely monitored by the FilmVideo Coalition, whose

members include the Motion Picture Distributors Association, VICA, Village Roadshow Companies, Greater Union Organisation and Philips Holdings. Its submission to the committee was made at the height of a concerted media campaign that昇到了 to less recent stories such as the Hoddle Street killings to popular movies. In particular *Rabbit*, it is predicted by critics that the Video Committee will be swayed by the more emotional messages emanating from those minority groups who believe that a more restrictive censorship regime is the panacea for all of society's ills.

The FilmVideo Coalition has carried out a survey of 2600 adults into public attitudes to censorship classification, which it claims is the most comprehensive ever of its kind in Australia. Of total survey respondents, 87 per cent want either custom censorship to remain unchanged or would prefer less censorship, 31 per cent favoured more censorship, and 11 per cent had no opinion. Interestingly, "Those in favour of more censorship and who were able to correctly identify films as being an 'R' classification represented only 13 per cent of all people surveyed."

For her part, Shattock opposes increases to levels of censorship, and believes that 'X' material should be available in special sections of video shops where its access could be controlled. On the committee's recommendations she says, "I suspect that there will be a reduction of violence in the 'R' classification. This may filter to other classifications." (She believes that more stringent rating and marking of cassettes will also be recommended.)

The real worry, she admits, is that films presently with 'R' ratings could be banned or cut to M. Apart from the commercial ramifications, this would have for distributors, the FilmVideo Coalition's concern is that films such as *The Deer Hunter*, *Rebel Without A Cause* and *Show Dogs* would be affected. It is a concern shared by many...



The Deer Hunter

ON VIEW

TRADITIONALLY, the video industry has no big push during the Christmas season. This year it started when CBS-Fox Video shipped more than 31,000 copies of *Crocodile Dundee* to video outlets in the middle of November. It has already become the biggest selling video in Australia, easily eclipsing the previous record of about 20,000 copies of *Top Gun* and *Back To The Future*. The Australian video rights were negotiated through a deal with 20th Century Fox, which assumed foreign theatrical rights to the film — excluding all North American rights, held by Paramount Pictures. Interestingly, the video distributor has already forecasted that the megaphat will become available as a collectible in 12 months time, though it is highly likely that this will happen "unofficially" as soon as demand in stores drops and

retailers sell their excess copies to customers.

Following its theatrical outing earlier this year, *Paul Cox's Castle*, the saga of the relationship between a blind collector of cast (played by Robert Miano) and a perfectly-sighted French virgin (Isabelle Huppert) will have a video release through Premiere. The New Zealand film *Mr Wrong* (Crystal Screen Entertainment) will screen at Cinemas in 1985. Director, co-producer and co-writer Gaylene Preston describes the tale of a woman who buys a heated car as a "wholesome thriller and a rippling yarn — no sex, no violence. It's basically about her and the victim-murderer relationship." It is Preston's first feature following a background in drama, Super 8 movies and producing and directing the documentary *Aborigines*. And finally, on the local front, Kabelco (CBS-Fox) makes a

very nasty sequel from television screen to video library. Produced by the Australian Children's Television Foundation (with the assistance of the ABC, the AFC and Film Victoria), the 32 "series" comprise locally-made live action shorts and animation, and will be released on six cassettes.

Within this season guarantees that the past year's best known films will be released to video — such as *Piranha* (RCA-Columbia-Hoyts), *Aliens* (CBS-Fox), *Children Of A Lesser God*, *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* (CIC-Tel), *The Color Of Money*, *Catagrophic Follies* (Warner) and *Lethal Weapon* (Warner) — the Christians spent well that can be represented by the sequel *Santa Baby*, *Deadly Night 2* (Warner). Now it's younger brother Rick's turn to kill, kill, kill. The film, like its predecessor, is distinguished by a bit from *Quentin's* more... carnalism (and). "This is one Santa story you won't want to tell your kids," gleefully boasts the publicity blurb.

Like An Angel, from Beyond (Warner) is based on a story by H. P. Lovecraft and directed by Stuart Gordon. It is described in *Monthly Film Bulletin* as "a richly loathsome carnival of invention... wriggling writhing from Goliathness, a touch of cannibalism from the *Living Dead* series, a leftover tenebris from *Quo*, a sprouting desecration from *Alien*, together with a fine macabre of flying Jews, amorphous flesh, and obscene liquids." Joe Bob Briggs, the infamous "drive-in movie critic" from *Campfire Tales*, would probably suggest you check it out.

As usual, there are a number of films that have bypassed the screen circuit. *The Abattoir* (CIC-Tel), in which Bangles singer Susanne Hoffs makes her film debut, is directed, produced and co-written by her mother, Tami Simon Hoffs. Recam and vintage rock'n'roll features prominently in this graduation night party film which looks back to the style of 1960s beach party films. Daniel Petrie produced and directed *Spine* (Dance

(Roadshow)) with Rob Lowe, Jane Alexander and Jason Robards. Eddie Saverin makes his directorial debut in *Reckless* (Warner), which he also wrote and which he describes as a modern day Robin Hood tale about a strong-willed pretty criminal who "decides to be a criminal for the people." Co-starring with Lowe are Dennis Miller. With all of these films it would seem that the casting of stars with a marque value is no guarantee that they get released in local cinemas.

Though nearly a year separates their producer, Eddie Edwards' two most recent offerings *That's Life!* and *Blind Date* will arrive simultaneously in video shops. Described in *Volley* as a film that is "personal virtually to the point of being a home movie," *That's Life* (Warner) was written by Edwards and his actress Milton Wayne Jack Lemmon plays a disgruntled architect who, on the eve of his 60th birthday, nervously awaits the results of his wife's biopsy and contemplates the worth of ageing. With a cast comprised of the director's friends and family, it was made on a very low budget under the app original title *Cilia*. In contrast, *Blind Date* (RCA-Columbia-Hoyts) sees Edwards of work with a traditional Hollywood scenario of mismatched romances and a harvested plot that serves to both then expand, the unlikely couple. Unknown, but occasionally hilarious, Bruce Willis plays the guy who seems to have it all together with Kim Bassinger as the slightly aloof counterpart — until, that is, the tables begin to turn.

Concomitantly turned director Diane Myri wrote and directed *Matey And Honey* (Seven Keys) in 1986. According to Leonard Maltin, it spent several years in the editing room. Peter Falk, John Cazale and Ned Beatty are cast in the story of mismatched heads and their tumultuous childhood friendships. Made about the same time and finally due for release is *The Tenant* (CIC-Tel). Director and writer Robert Pollock cast himself in the horror film, made during a lull in his career.

Most worthy viewing without commercial interruption is

Nicholas Ray's zombie and *Mosk In A Lonely Place* (RCA-Columbia-Hoyts); a mournful lament on Ray's troubled relationship with Hollywood. He cast Humphrey Bogart as the close screamer accused of murder and implicated in a kinky romance with Gloria Grahame (on the rear Ray's estranged wife), claiming "I took the gun out of Bogie's hands." Thankfully the film is in its original state, which is more than can be said of *The Angel And The Architect* and Otto Preminger's *Saint Joan* (both CEL). Two new collections of exploitation about to be released on video

Shot on 35mm, ostensibly for theatrical release, *I Live With My Dad* (CBS-Fox) will debut on home video during January. Thus Crossed Production is directed by Paul Melody from a script by Peter Pinney based on the short story by Derry Moore. The story of a six year old whom the authorities want to separate from his vagrant, heavy-drinking father features Peter Harker and Haydon Samuels as the father and son. Donald Miller, Rebecca Goss, Robyn Correra, Guy Mancuso and Eileen Morris star. *The Shadow Dance* (Crystal Screen) Entertainment, produced by Joann Warren and Jon Tyrell and directed by Marc Johnson debuts. Set 15 years in the future, it concerns a group

of children who invent *The Game*, which becomes a truly life-and-death-sentence encounter.

Other recent and forthcoming arrivals in video libraries worthy of mention are *Demons Prejudice* (Roadshow), director Walter Hill's mighty assault to form in a raunchy hybrid Western, *Belle Gordon's* enquiry into a woman's ambiguous involvement with pornography in *Verity* (CEL); Ingmar Bergman's 1983 Oscar production *From The Life Of Christ* (Crystal Screen Entertainment) and the recent theatrical hit *Alone Alive* (RCA-Columbia-Hoyts) from director Neil Jordan. Gary Sherman's 1982 British film *Death Line* (Warner) has been recently released. This film — which has also appeared in a bastardised form as *New Moon* — kernels several mentions in Robin Wood's books *Hollywood From Hell*, *To Reagan and The American Nightmare*. In the former, Wood discusses the film's account of cannibals preying on travellers in London — the film is set entirely in Russell Square Station — as a metaphor of the war experience in which the younger generation is devoured by the past. Elsewhere the film is discussed as the most recent embodiment of the deepest myth.



Steve J. Lee



THE BULL, THE BEAR AND THE GORILLA

The New Zealand film industry's reaction to the much-maligned spinoffs of October-November, which saw the bull give way to the bear, was to send A Gorilla.

The first feature project for the Pacifica Company of producers Dorothy and Pauliford began on schedule at October's end, even though the investment climate was beginning to falter, given a \$16.1 million wheel-out of New Zealand movie values during those determinedly nervous annual weeks.

Pauliford, who has moved from independent production from a marketing background at the New Zealand Film Commission and the Colenso Group, is not discarding the budget of her "unresearched feature comedy."

But the confidence evident now is new and raw; during the seven-week shoot was a sign of the anxiety of the package she has put together with Barry Saxon (between ESTO, the film commission, and Television New Zealand).

For 70 per cent of the budget, EST had world rights to this second feature of Muriel Reed (*Officer Mac*), who also is credited as writer.

The industry has not entirely entirely snatched.

While it is generally agreed the production arm of the industry is unlikely to be greatly affected in the months ahead, less of suspicion is

given as reason for delay of a new Geoff Murphy film.

Producer Des Reynolds, an executive director of Mitre-Renmark Corp (MRC), had hoped to get Murphy's *The Parasite/Men* rolling on 7 November. He has since set about drawing an alternative plan involving an offshoot production to fund the project.

Although he had no new date at the time this column was written, Reynolds is awaiting the production will get under way.

MRC started in August and is the only New Zealand film producer house publicly listed on the New Zealand stock exchange. It survived eight buffettings at one point during the stormy days when a panel of 22 share values was sold off at a low of 15 cents. Says Reynolds: "Our shares are at the hands of so few people that we have not been heavily affected."

MRC completed the main shoot of *Any Party A Soldier's Day* in northern France in late October, and reports best business ever — "over the \$1,000,000 worth of sales" — for product it was handing at the October Midas in Milford.

Pauliford says *Send A Gorilla* will be ready for the Cannes market in April.

"Who knows what will be highly successful? But, what surprised me about this story is that it made me laugh a lot. It

contains characters and scenarios I can relate to and is set in areas or cities of a city that could be anywhere."

She is location in and around Wellington, the action covers one day in the lives of Vicki, Jay and Chort, who work for the Seal A Gorilla Shipping Company. The day is Valentine's Day.

As well as coping with personal complications of sexual variety, the Kew-chortian shipping telegrams in a round trip of one every 20 minutes in order to fulfil their contract.

Featured actresses are Perry Harvey, Katherine McRae and Cheryl McGinnis. The large cast of skilled performers includes John Cullen and Lorraine Tops.

With a reputation as a financial misnomer, Sealer Road moved from suspense *Officer Mac* to lugubrious comedy with *Gorilla*. One of her aims is to give actors the opportunity to take their characters right to the edge of "terrible" comedy situations, attached to the limit of credibility, yet believable and recognizable to the audience.

Pauliford considers when asked the style of the film, and then answers *My Beautiful Laundry*, *Lester* (P. Brookfield), and the Canadian film *Pete's Dragon*.

A shrewd marketer, she believes it will do the kind of business — "as much if not more" — enjoyed by Geoff Murphy's *The Grey Seal* which the handied when working for Colenso. It will receive the top grossing New Zealand film to be released in the United States.

The share market shakers appeared to offer no objection to the takeover of Karridge-Gibson Corp, one of the country's two film exhibition chains.

Before the Black Tuesday on Wall Street, one of New Zealand's youngest and most aggressive entrepreneurial companies, Pasear Pacific Corp, bought the 50 per cent British-based Rank Organisation interest in EO, with 37-year-old David Phillips becoming its new chairman.

John Karridge, younger son of the company's founder, the late Mr Karridge, resigned as group general manager for film and video, although remaining a director on the board.

During the early weeks of ploughing share values, Pasear compensated a way making the remaining Karridge and Williams family interests in the

entertainment conglomerate, and later confirmed a half-reduced acceptance being put into play in the group to more than 50 per cent. The value of the group, as measured by the latest bid, is about \$NZ150,000,000.

The initial Pasear purchase considered a marked change of approach among EO executives, suggesting a more aggressive approach to the distribution and exhibition of films by what the executives themselves acknowledged as "the deepest play." EO owns and operates 37 cinemas throughout the country with 15 others operated in partnership with New Zealand's other paper chain, Armpressured Thomas.

New film distributors are also entering the New Zealand market with Associated Pacific Holdings setting up here in association with Hawkestone Entertainment Corp, a production company that includes John Burns, producer of *Power Play*, among its principals.

These developments are important for the production side of the industry and new owners like Pasear & Thomas. Conceivably they will lead to the future delivery of more national exhibitions and more concentrated protection of New Zealand-made films with film-packets here and, perhaps, across the Tasman.

Film commission chairman David George is confident in his creation of the past track record of the two exhibition chains and their single-mindedness in exhibiting offshore productions with track records that effectively need no special promotion within New Zealand.

He says it often has been difficult to convince either chain of the merits of exhibiting in particular New Zealand film and the special promotion that film will need to make any film go in its catalogue.

As a consequence, the commission in 1987 is to concentrate on exhibition aspects of the New Zealand film industry, to see what it can do to improve the availability of local films to local audiences.

This could involve making some of money available to publishers films made under its wings, as happened last in 1987 with Barry Barclay's *Alma*.

In this context, George says, the commission is already talking with the changing board as to what it can become. Pasear Karridge Corp Ltd.

Adie Nicoloff

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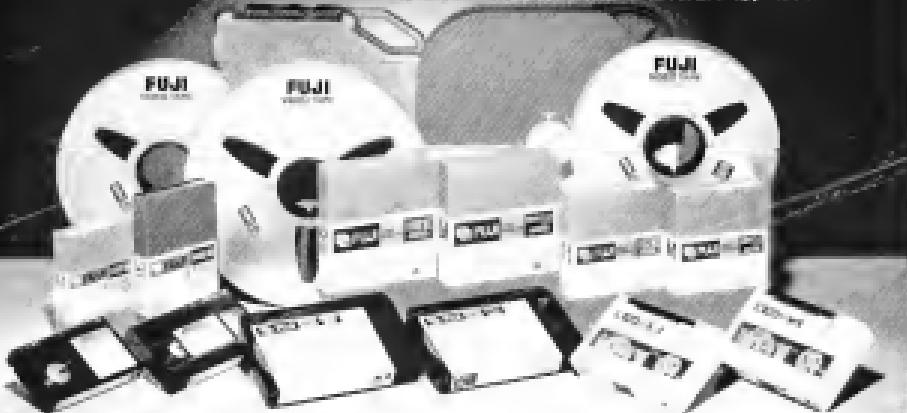
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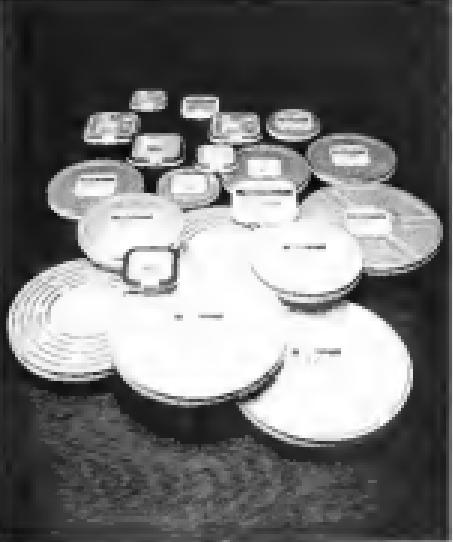
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THE SHOWSCAN

Celebrating Us is a panoramic documentary short made for the first Australian 70mm Showscan system. FRED HARDEN talked to the crew and found out about the fear and loathing, as well as the satisfaction, that came with the project.

BIGGER AND BIGGER

Even with the advances in high-definition video systems the image quality conceivable from film is still much greater. That may be why in the face of these fearsome foes the superlativity of the process that is known as "cinema" continues to develop, but it is more likely, I believe, film is only now starting to deliver its full potential. These improvements in equipment and film stocks all affect the content and creative applications of the filmmaking process. In the pursuit of quality and in the godlike attempt to re-create the outside our concerned filmmakers have stretched the size of the screen and the film itself. Big pictures from big negatives have a lot of detail, and the last for ultimate film image quality has pushed the motion picture into some strange directions. After the hype for the early ultrawide 70mm systems — Todd-AO, Super Panavision, and the Ultra-Panavision 70 — had died down, it seemed that we had gone about as far as we could go and still lift the good onto the projector. There are some 70mm stereoscopic cinemas but 35mm is still the preferred practical projection format.

70MM, IT'S HOT

The practical considerations are important. The widest color motion picture print stock that Kodak makes in commercial quantity is 70mm. As a production medium, however, the film stocks and cameras for 70mm isn't actually 70mm. It is actually 65mm wide, using a four-perforation sprocket hole, with perforations vertically spaced as they are on 35mm film (as one concession to the laboratory handling of dual 35mm prints). When this is printed onto the projection release print that there is less room for magnetic stereo and surround sound prints. Showscan used the same area for an even higher quality image, and

saves the costs from compact discs.

No content to leave it there, and working with the same physical parameters, there is a part Australian-designed system called Showscan that uses a special camera with the 65mm film turned on its side and then printed the same way onto 70mm to give a negative 32 8mm high by 70 4mm wide. That's almost three inches wide and the image is slightly different. Conventional systems require specially built projectors with custom designed transports to shift that huge negative frame through the gate. The Showscan lenses have highly curved surround screens, great for short documentary "My god, roll down the roller coaster" type presentations in exhibitions and theme parks.

FASTER AND FASTER

Douglas Trumbull has been using 65mm film for special effects work in films from 2001: A Space Odyssey and the first Star Wars movie through to Close Encounters Of The Third Kind, the mysterious Black Hole, up to his present work. For special effects work, the large negative helps to maintain finer grain before the final reduction to a 35mm release print.

As well as working with the big 65mm negative, he was involved in experimentation on decreasing the perceived flicker of film projectors by

increasing projection speed. Even the cinema standard 24 frames a second projectors use multi-bladed shutters to flicker each frame twice to push the rate over the point where the brain accepts the images as continuous. With a lot more frames presented on screen something special happens in the eye and brain that smooths out the intermittent light and dark process that is the basis of our art. The images look sharper, grain almost disappears, and motion blur is reduced. Trumbull found an optimum point running at 60 frames a second, and developed his Showscan system.

He patented the process, found financial backing and there are now a number of Showscan theaters across the USA and Canada. The first Australian theater is scheduled for Sydney and is due for completion in early 1998.

The Sydney company Holograph Pty Ltd., in association with Los Angeles, was commissioned to produce the program for the first screening and it was through associate producer Bill Davies and cinematographer Peter James that I first heard of the project. As the film and theater was to be part of the MCA Showman's offering there was a lot of "You will soon talk about, no we can't" while shooting was going on. What did come through were

the stories of quite incredible technical problems.

MAY YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING LIFE (and Chinese currency)

The shooting began with a Showscan-modified 65mm Panavision camera in December 1996 with Peter James as director of photography and Andre Fleuren as second camera. Having been warned about camera problems by the Canadians who made the Showscan film for the Expo in Vancouver, the company concerned they were well covered by assembling a package of two complete camera systems (one has a third body) and enlisting top camera technician Rob Hunter from Summersons.

This problem began to be noticed immediately. The rushes were initially projected at 24 (fps) in QCL's new theater complex in George Street. A common shingress problem was detected and Rob Hunter and Summersons started the test of many series of work on both of the cameras. Because they were covering a timetable events such as the Sydney to Hobart yacht race, the production continued with the handicap of a turnaround time of almost 10 days for rushes from the MCA lab in Los Angeles.

By the time they had exhausted all the repair possibilities and had a replacement camera Peter James was unable to finish the film because of commitments to another production and Andre Fleuren continued as DOP.

I had to wait until the end of the shoot to talk to producer/director John Wesley and Andre Fleuren. Although they had finished shooting, editor Nick Holmes found that the problems that had plagued them were not quite over. Just as the article was finished they received from Vancouver, where the cut workprint was projected in the cinema that will be a model for the Sydney one. After the long haul of the production



ACTUAL SIZE: The 70mm film

MUST GO ON



ON LOCATION Showscan at work.

They had some more positive comments to make and I have added these to the behind-the-camera story that, as the *Times* says, was "interesting." (And not without its share of total invention.)

THE SHOWSCAN EXPERIENCE

I asked the director John Wesley why Showscan was chosen over the other available big-screen systems. In the planning stage, an interest was expressed in Showscan and IMAX. "We went to the States to check it out and, having seen both, I thought Showscan was better. The quality is better and I prefer the theatre — it is not as reduced as the IMAX theatre. This IMAX has a radically reduced audience seating arrangement. You have to turn your head to see all the screens, and I found that I didn't enjoy the experience. I feel that I was too close to the screen. When you look at the Showscan screen, it takes up your full field of view, so your eyes are moving constantly

across the screen but your head doesn't have to move. I feel that it concentrates your attention better."

As Wesley explained, improving the experience of the viewer is the most important factor in Showscan. You don't just talk about the screen, but the whole cinema because it is all designed as one piece. The angle of projector to screen, the relationship of the seats to the screen and the angle of view are all calculated carefully. It's a single viewing machine that you sit in and it is well beautifully worked out so that every seat in the house is a good seat.

Learning what does and does not work on the Showscan screen was an important part of the process but was often circumvented by working around the physical restrictions. Because of the spectators' nature of the large-screen presentations like Showscan, when shows run for a long time before audiences become fatigued, there are only a few short programs available for study,

and they are not in the kind of film that Wesley wanted to make.

"I was very scrapping about the early films when I saw them, because cinematically they are uninteresting. They start every sequence with what's basically a studio set up, on a sort of life-size model launch off the life-set for two or three shots, then go back to it. When you look at the film it is basically 50 per cent studio set up from which you depart briefly for the Showscan experience then jump back to the studio. Someone will say 'Where are we now?' and you go on to the next scene, told you when I tried to shoot the bloody thing I developed a great deal into sympathy and understanding!"

"We started out," Wesley continued, "thinking we had a firm idea of what it was going to be. After a while there was what on a better day you'd call 'feedback' from the system and they really blew the original intentions to pieces. We found it almost impossible to shoot interiors.

It is hard to believe that anything is impossible nowadays but, for example, you can't shoot anything with a fluorescent light or video screen in shot, because of the fluorescence, sticky residue and heat build-up. We tried to shoot in a currency clearing room in a bank and it was unsatisfactory because of all the computer screens in the place, and even then we had to pump an enormous quantity of our own light on it. It's quite unbelievable just to do a set up of two girls near a piano you were lighting it as if you were lighting a stadium to get any depth at all."

"And depth is so terribly important (because) you have to be in focus, you can't even use half the techniques that are commonplace in filmmaking. Like having hard focus on someone walking past in the foreground and let the rest of it go. Because Showscan is so sharp, whatever anything is out of focus, it's like your eyes have been hit."

This requirement for absolute focus affected the ➤

options available to the director of photography, making things we take for granted in 35mm impossible to do. Andre Fleuret explained that he couldn't use any diffusion and had I insisted his effects to grade.

He was concerned that "because shooting even normal '60's' set ups was so difficult, we worried that we wouldn't get the shots that everybody expects you to get with 35mm. Because the audience is so spoiled with 35mm, where you can almost get anything you want, they would be upset if they couldn't have had the same sophistication. But with Showcam, the normal 35mm support systems aren't there. Just physically rigging the camera is difficult. If you want to put it on a helicopter you have to make your own riggers. The same if you want to put it on a plane, or underwater; everything has to be redesigned. Because the camera is so big, you change something as small as you like so that you just fit it to say, the Jet Ranger. Then when we changed cameras the dimensions were different again."

CHANGING CAMERAS MIDSTREAM

The camera problems and breakdowns were part of the whole Australian Showcam production story. Bolts would shear, screws come loose, and the replacement parts always had to come from America. The major loss of the first month of filming, however, was due to a fault in the Panavision equipment that cannot be explained. As John Wexley said, "It is a mystery. The most coherent theory we had was from Rob Hunter from Bausmann who said that because the camera had a pellet between the lens elements and the film plane, the pellet was vibrating in sympathy with the camera and that was somehow scattering the light to the area less."

"Everyone has their own description of how it looked, but it was just uniform. The difficulty in getting our rushes didn't help. It takes about three or four days to get a rushes report from the US lab and they are pretty exhausted. It takes about 10 days in all for the rushes to get back here, and because the location is so scattered for that film you were never in the place where you shot it when

you got the rushes. You go out by day and see through the weather which is pretty poor anyway. You expose the film and send it away and two weeks later you find out if you've shot correctly."

"It's a tough way to work and I've made documentaries for the BBC for a long time in some out-of-the-way places. Often you are trying to shoot film that is responsive to what you've already done. You are trying to build it in your head as you go along. In several pieces you won't be using rushes but there you could simply assume that the equipment was doing its job, and say well if we shot the very it will be yesterday or last week. With the equipment we had for the Showcam shoot you couldn't make that assumption, but you still had to make it."

The lack of rushes feedback was tough on the DOP as well. As Fleuret said, "As a cameraman you is always guessing in a way, and you can't hold yourself responsible for every little thing in the chain but in Showcam when the chain is so strong and it hangs together, so that you can reasonably predict the outcome. With the cameras we had the chain just drops out, nothing hangs together. We were standing out in the country in front of 200 acres of sunflowers and we had done one shot and the chain belt just snapped. There was no spare belt, so you just had to go home not only having lost what would have been a beautiful shot but everything about all the earlier stuff you had done while the belt was falling apart."

Because they had lost so much time and so many unique filming opportunities, the decision was made that, despite Panavision's and the company's best efforts, they should find another camera. It was not to be such a simple answer to their problems, however.

"As soon as the new camera arrived," John Wexley said, "we headed off to Broken Hill. Peter James was with us at the time and on the first day of shooting with the new camera it broke down three times. We gradually got it to work."

The functionally poor camera equipment comes, he believes, "out of the way the Showcam has been developed. Understandable, all the money and effort initially will go into the



BOFF OR BUST: Nick Holmes

presentation side, because that's what the basic end the audience are interested in. They don't care about the crew on location. When Doug Trumbull was trying to get the system going it was,

essentially the exhibition side of things he had to conquer to get acceptance. The new projectors sound systems and so forth were very well designed. In Vancouver where a show was running ten hours a day for six months they never lost a screening, it was 100 per cent reliable. But with the production side they were depending on something that had originally been designed to run at 24 frames a second and recharging them to run at 60 and they all hate it. They scream, bellow, whine and complain, they trash bits at you, anything that rattles out at 60 frames."

Showcam are now having a few purpose-built cameras made. A prototype has been demonstrated and has been pulled apart to copy and build the first four dedicated Showcam cameras. Wexley and Fleuret both agree they wouldn't attempt to do another film without a purpose-built camera.

The other thing they discovered was that the camera was very noisy. With a laugh Wexley said, "You can hear it clearly a hundred yards away. We wanted to get a sticker for the camera that said 'Turn grass into lawn and change the name of the system to Vista-Vision'. We were shooting on Australia Day and Tom Kennedy saw us and came up and said, 'Good god, what's going on here, I thought it must be the Bangladesh Broadcasting Corporation' — and here we are at the forefront of technology!"

TAKING STOCK

The filmstock used was the normal Eastmancolor '47 and '48, only it's 35mm wide.

Fleuret explained, straightforwardly, that they shot '47 in broad daylight and '48 when the sun went behind a cloud. No-one knows if the difference in the grain will be noticeable on the big screen with the two stocks intercut. Both Peter James and Fleuret commented on what appeared to be an exposure buildup in contrast on the first rushes, and Fleuret was even concerned whether they really were the same emulsions that we all know in 35mm.

"The first results we got were very contrary," he said. "I was a shoot at Reddy on a beach at Byres Bay outside by the sea. A sandy beach with blue sky everywhere and the off-white side of the face just went as dark. When you see the rushes you think, 'My god this is terrible.' Even when you tilted it, it would go dark. So I had to look into it. I went to Kodak here and in LA, they did tests and told me that it's all the same. I checked as much as I could the processing at MGM with Colorline here — it's hard to try other processing because only MGM and Tokyo do 35mm. Colorline said that they believed the processing was OK (but the difference is in the printing). MGM uses a 'hot' printing system that is a lot faster than here which should add a bit more contrast, but not that enormous amounts we were getting."

"I resigned myself to the fact that it was the lenses which and Pentax 50mm lenses. Still lenses are always more contrary than specifically designed one

lenses. Apparently both Cinema Products and Panavision are designing lenses for the system at the moment but until then we will have to put up with the cont'd."

John Wesley is not so worried. "We feel like we are working blind, and one of the factors is that we've never seen the images projected properly with a light source anything like what will be used. So we've got no idea really of what it will be like on the big screen, other than the US films which were shot on the same film and lenses and look great."

(As it happened Wesley was right. The rushes projector gave no indication of how they would look. At their Vancouver screening the images looked terrible.)

SHAKES AND SUPERSTITIONS.

"We were told that these were the best lenses," Flanagan said. "They're the Panavision range of 2½-inch lenses and range from 35mm to 300mm but we soon realised that we couldn't use the 300 or the 600 because the camera shakes so much that you can't get a steady picture. We had to put the camera on a Super Panhead or an O'Connell 360 and we tried a number of times to use the 300mm lens. If you were on sand you could sometimes get away with it but on concrete, forget it. So we used sandbags on the concrete floor and depending on how tight the film is in the magazine you could sometimes accept it. But the very last stuff we shot was on a 35mm lens and it shaking."

"I don't know why it is. Maybe it is the way of the film that sometimes put extra strain on the camera. It was modified to run at 60 frames but sometimes you see the vibration in the viewfinder or you feel it in your head because your eye is right there and you feel your head shaking. You see the cameras moving and think, 'Is this to not right and it always happens when you are shooting something you can't repeat? The City to Surf, the start of the Sydney to Hobart yacht race, anything that is a passer.' This causes somehow known and runs for just two seconds," Wesley added that. "We've all become very superstitious."

The length limitations in the choice of magazines were

also a frustration. There were two sizes, the 1000-foot magazine which holds three minutes of film or the 300-foot which gives a minute.

Wesley found that restrictive in many situations such as long tracking shots where "the 30 seconds you might use may turn up anywhere in say, 10 minutes of action. You'd roll on an aerial for a few bumps and just when the air would smooth out you'd be out of film! That happened also with the special underwater housing we built for the most of the jet ski to shoot in surf." Wes couldn't see what we were getting and the guy on the jet ski can only approximate it and with the small mag he had only 60 seconds of film. That 60 seconds might be spent just getting into position. It was really frustrating.

"It appeals you for looking at movies in cinemas and on TV," he continued. "I sit there feeling shocked at what they use. How can they use a shot like that? It's so rough. That shot's out of focus! And everyone else is just enjoying the movie!"

HANDLING THEM

Just physically handling such a large width of film was difficult. John Wesley jokes that when they're asked about what sort of film they're making they say, "Oh the film's very heavy! There's a lot of come down from the assistant editor from lifting the film up onto the bench." Each 3000-foot projection reel weighs about 30 kilos and the assistants say that just winding the reel can take skin off their knuckles if they aren't careful. And they try not to drag it.

Even a normal reel spinning in the camera produced a gyroscopic effect that had major implications for using it in a helicopter. It didn't want to move out from its position, and the operator had to fight to tilt it in the other wing.

John Wesley said, "I used to feel for the loaders because you've got a roll of film that weighs nine pounds or so that you are trying to get into a magazine that has a quarter inch tolerance on the edges and you can't tell that you've got the centre right over the spindle. So you have to just drop it with your hand in your mouth knowing that that roll of film cost 10 thousand bucks! If you drop it the wrong way it catches and it's gone because you can't close the magazine."

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You come back to the production office saying, 'I've screwed up another one'."

Besides of the width of the film it is very susceptible to brushing and it scratches easily," Fleuren said. "And it always scratches in the best spot. On one of the US Showcan films there's a great shot from a flying fox over Niagara Falls and you just get to the middle and there's this great baseline of a big stretch down it. It's there in their film."

There are other problems caused by the sheer size of the film. The width of film across the gate is greater than 35mm, with the only support on the edges which means that it is also more likely to bend and sag. The sprocket holes carry more strain so they are more likely to break and there is the added issue of travelling at 30 frames a second through the cameras. Thirty-five millimetre film by comparison is pretty tough stuff. Fleuren adds "If you got a team 1000 feet of film up to speed, especially with the Persimmon, and then you stop but the roll is in the magazine doesn't it? It was a real problem with the sprocket when the camera wasn't accessible. You had to keep rolling it on to take up the slack or when you started again it would just go whack and split?"

(DIS)ADVANTAGES

With all the restrictions placed on them by the system it is surprising to find that they had anything positive to say about the equipment that gave them a positive advantage. John Whalley mentioned that "there are two things that were against us that we have turned into advantages. The first was when we couldn't even shoot a normal shot in a rain forest, we just couldn't get the exposure." The widest stop on the Panavision lenses was f2.8, and at 30 frames you are losing stops, but you must still have to reach depth of field, which means a minimum of about f6.2. Paired with not being able to shoot in shadow or much part sunburst they marketed a Non-stop intervalometer which allowed them to expose at up to eight seconds per frame and the result, Whalley said "has ended up giving us something special".

"The second thing was that we had to give up the convention that the cameras

wasn't there, that it was an invisible presence. There is nothing less invisible or insidious than that bloody camera! So we realised that we would just accept that and make it a part of the story.

Everybody in the film knows that the cameras are there and acknowledge it. And that's one of the things that is really nice, the man's this real eye contact by the people on the screen with the audience. It's charming and it's now an essential part of the style of the film."

THE SOUND

The sound, Whalley says again, showed up the contrast in the Showcan system. "The sound reproduction in the theatre is probably the best known to man. It is no digital discrete track off Compaq Disc and it sounds fantastic. Yet when you are shooting you can't afford sound because the camera noise is phenomenal, so we had to create everything." Michael Gleason has recorded everything digitally on PCM and the whole issued gets of the film will be digital to the compact disc. Roger Savage is cutting it together, and it will sound great.

"It was disturbing for me because with this sort of impressionist documentary you would normally expect to have sound coming out of the people. With the limitations of the machinery we had to find ways like shooting to playback, to get the feeling that you weren't cut off from the images."

EDITING WITH 3D-PDDT VISUAL LEVERS

There is no 35mm editing equipment. The procedure used to date was to make super-print 35mm resolution prints, then to convert the 30 frames to 24 frames a second to cut conventionally. This means cuts are not frame accurate and it is hard to judge quality. It was also expensive — so the production devised their own method of projecting the original workprint and recording it with a video camera to produce a time-code-displayed cassette that is cut on a conventional offline system. A computer program then edits the code to the film edge numbers.

Editor Neil Holmes said, "Cutting on video isn't my preferred mode but it is the best we can do. At least we

have looked at a fairly big picture from projecting the 35mm masters. The Americans and the Canadians who worked on colour reduction prints could take the blemishing and the imperfections until it was conforming. Even with our shaky projector we can see the technical quality."

"When I came onto the project my concern was how accurate the timeline is to tape was. We have sync marks at the beginning and end of each roll and used a computer program that correlates the timescale to edge numbers. The printout will be in edge numbers to conform the timing, weightage to the video. When we tested it we found that the result varied with the tension on the take-up reel, the amount of elasticity being used in Batman that day etc. The speed varied up to six or seven per cent faster or slower. With so much stuff cut to music, different shots in a sequence would have been out of sync depending on when they were transferred."

They decided to get Editor Gérard Génaine Thibault in to solve the problem. Thibault fixed a disc to the projector with a hundred holes in it and an optical sensor system that counted the rotations. This was compared to the open rate of the cameras and the voltage going to the projector via filmcells.

"Unsurprisingly it was too accurate, going out of sync when it shifted just by three-thousandths of a second. Thibault went back to Melbourne for a re-think and came up with the present system that uses only 10 holes. Now it is accurate to about three-hundredths of a second, which is approximately a fifth of a frame and Holmes says "it works like a charm". The 26 frames of PAL video correspond exactly to 30 frames of film a second, with a not too objectionable blurring or flicker on the tape.

Whalley feels that they will be breaking new ground because the existing Showcan films are edited so conventionally with only brief excursions into montage. "They are not chains of complicated images as this is, with hundreds of shots. We could not get much information from Showcan about what to do or not do in editing and it is a different grammar. We are just making assumptions about it on the video, which we see it."

projected we will change things when it's conformed. We were aware that when it is enlarged on the big screen, there is a leverage effect. The apparent movement is enormous and the speed of movement radically increases on the screen so that you have to overcome your natural looking through the lens or with you are cutting and say, 'I'll have to make it slower'."

According to Holmes, "The set and watched the rushes projected so that I've got a fair idea of what will work and we've got the option to re-cut after assembling the workprint and screening it. When I first started to edit I began cutting much slower to make allowances for the size, but now I'm saying if it doesn't work on my screen who is to know it will work on another. We're just going for it, if it's exciting on the TV screen then it's going to be incredibly exciting on a screen a thousand times bigger!"

It must have been an incredible relief to Whalley to have watched the film projected in Vancouver. He described the result as breathtaking and found that, "Our experience was very like that of the Canadians. They too tested the system every day — until they are the finished product. Then the film begins to look and be replaced by something like us at those huge crystal-clear images. The audience don't know or care that the cameras exploded seconds after the shot, and after a while neither do you."

The Showcan story deserves to be treated in full. The speed tape projection and theatre are all technically innovative. As far as this I still haven't seen the result and given it is a new concept that the theatres being built in the Darling Harbour complex will not be finished on schedule. Although we may have to wait a few months to see the results, there is one high tech genius who is bring up every for a treat.

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James Roney	Production manager
Stephen Pavao	Postproduction supervisor
Peter James	Postproduction
Andy Hayes	Director of photography
Bill Jones	Editor
Paul Johnson	Editor
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such as evidence of all ages. The human species, a polytypic one, seems to have been in Europe for long. There is no reason why the human species should not have spread and developed separately in Europe and Asia, without meeting there or elsewhere, except perhaps in the course of some very long period.

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ANSWER

**FOR THE SUPPLY OF ALL
FILM PRODUCTION TRANSPORT
CONTACT DAVID SUTTOR
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THE INDEPENDENT PRESS, BOSTON, MASS.

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PRODUCERS
Help us make this production survey as complete as possible. If you have something which is about to go into pre-production, let us know and we will make sure it is included. Call Kathy Bell on (012) 421 8811, or write to her at *Observe Papers*, 49 Charles Street, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 1JG.

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THE PUBLISHER

PRODUCTION
SURVEY

DOCUMENTARIES

1000

Final imagery	Any photo imagery
Context	Minimum imagery
Properties	Maximum imagery
Location	High-level imagery
Multi-performativity	Full functionality
Literacy	No literacy
Memory	Very good
Speed	Very fast
Storage	Extremely large

100-1000

Post company	Long Island
Producer	Edie March
Editor	Edie March
Marketing	Edie March
Sales manager	John Karpel
Sales representative	John Karpel
Editor	Edie March
Marketing	CPG, Johnson Books
Sales	Edie March
Marketing director	John Karpel
President	John Karpel
Executive Vice President and Director of Sales	John Karpel
Marketing manager	John Karpel
Marketing director	John Karpel
Marketing manager	John Karpel
Marketing manager	John Karpel

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第十一章 水利工程概论

Primary category	Sub-categories
Business	Communications Finance Manufacturing Retail
Consumer	Entertainment Food and Beverage Healthcare Retail
Education	Child Development Adult Education Higher Education
Healthcare	Medical Devices Healthcare Services Healthcare Products
Information	Search Social Media News
Manufacturing	Automotive Aerospace Electronics Plastics
Retail	Apparel Grocery Automotive Electronics Plastics
Transportation	Aerospace Automotive Electronics Plastics
Utilities	Electric Power Natural Gas Water
Automotive	Automotive Components Automotive Services Automotive Vehicles
Electronics	Consumer Electronics Industrial Electronics
Plastics	Consumer Plastics Industrial Plastics
Automotive	Automotive Components Automotive Services Automotive Vehicles
Electronics	Consumer Electronics Industrial Electronics
Plastics	Consumer Plastics Industrial Plastics

WHAT'S NEW

Local company	Overseas
Business	Major business
Geography	Major geographic area
Environment	Major environmental factors
Technology	Major technological factors
Other	Major other factors
Product/service	Product/service
All market characteristics	Product/service
Marketing strategy	Marketing strategy
Marketing mix	Marketing mix
Marketing plan	Marketing plan
Marketing research	Marketing research
Marketing control	Marketing control
Marketing audit	Marketing audit
Marketing assessment	Marketing assessment
Marketing	Marketing
Length	— 10 minutes
Complexity	— Standard, CIMA, DPMI

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- 10 -

REMOVED OUT OF PATENTS.—
Selling and the right Number Series.

Resources

www.BPProducers.com

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Notes: Estimated.
Cochran's Q test was significant for all comparisons except between the two groups of patients supported by dialysis.

THE TOP HILL

Offending trait	Age
Aggression	Adolescence
Impulsivity	Adolescence
Low self-control	Adolescence
Low effortful control	Adolescence
Low conscientiousness	Adolescence
Low extraversion	Adolescence
Low agreeableness	Adolescence
Low neuroticism	Adolescence
Low conscientiousness	Young adults
Low extraversion	Young adults
Low agreeableness	Young adults
Low neuroticism	Young adults
Low conscientiousness	Older adults
Low extraversion	Older adults
Low agreeableness	Older adults
Low neuroticism	Older adults

S H O R T S

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STREETSIDE - SAMBA

Director: Steven Bernstein
Writer: Steven Bernstein
Music: Steven Bernstein & Jim Kerasi
Production: The New American Company
 Storyline: A young man's summer vacation ends in death when he becomes involved in the politics and sex games of the city's street kids.

TOOK

Director: Jeff Johnson
Writer: Jeff Johnson
Photography: Steven Soderbergh
Music: Steven Soderbergh
Production: Young People's Film Co.
 Storyline: Taking place in a small town in the Midwest, the experience of a group of teenagers in their first year of college is told through the eyes of the film's hero, who has come to the outside heights of his society.

THREEWED IN THE TOWN

Director: John Cusack
Writer: John Cusack
Photography: John Cusack
Music: John Cusack
Production: John Cusack
 Storyline: A killing, mysterious assassin, in the form of a woman, is hunting down those who have lied to them in their last days.

TO THE SEA

Director: John Goodman
Writer: John Goodman
Photography: John Goodman
Music: John Goodman
Production: John Goodman
 Storyline: A journey of body, mind and spirit.

WHEN THE GUNS DON'T TOUCH THE TOUGH SO SHOOTING

Director: John Goodman
Writer: John Goodman
Photography: John Goodman
Music: John Goodman
Production: John Goodman
 Storyline: A Bill, a very real, in-depth coming-of-age story from the bright minds and imaginations of some of our finest and most interesting filmmakers with all-new scenes and situations.

WILD MOOSE

Director: Peter Berg
Writer: Peter Berg
Photography: Peter Berg
Music: Peter Berg
Production: Peter Berg
 Storyline: Based in fact, a wild spring can result in conflict - The gods - the animals - the humans - the land - the weather - but supported by the old and the new.

A WOMAN'S PRIDE

Director: Peter Berg
Writer: Peter Berg
Photography: Peter Berg
Music: Peter Berg
Production: Peter Berg
 Storyline: A billion entrepreneurs from the past based on love and success in a woman's life and career.

and a very interesting woman.

1987 STUDENT PRODUCTIONS

S U S P E N D
(VICTORIA COLLEGE)

HIGHFEST

Producer: John Sculley
Writing, Directing and Production Control: John Sculley
 Storyline: Based on a true story about a person's struggle to find his place in the world.

Writer: Michael Moore
Director: Peter Lawrence
Music: Brian Eno
Production: Mattie Muller
 Storyline: A film about the search for personal power where it's found through art and the search for personal rights which express itself in power.

Former: Stephen Segal's people on the street at 10 am are still in bed at 10 pm. This is a film about the search for personal power where it's found through art and the search for personal rights which express itself in power.

COAL MINE OF MORTHALES
Director: John Sculley
Writer: John Sculley
Photography: John Sculley
Music: John Sculley
Production: John Sculley
 Storyline: A commentary on the coal mining industry, the life and death of one man and his family, and the search for one man's place in the world.

HEAD INS OUT
Director: Peter Berg
Writer: Peter Berg
Photography: Peter Berg
Music: Peter Berg
Production: Peter Berg
 Storyline: A film about the search for personal power where it's found through art and the search for personal rights which express itself in power.

Former: 1000 miles, 100 miles
Storyline: A real boy's account with intense details on his depression and identity issues.

BEST ONE COMEDY

Director: Steven Soderbergh
Writer: Steven Soderbergh
Photography: Steven Soderbergh
Music: Steven Soderbergh
Production: Steven Soderbergh
 Storyline: A parody of the educational travel show of today's television series.

VALUJACHE

Director: Steven Soderbergh
Writer: Steven Soderbergh
Photography: Steven Soderbergh
Music: Steven Soderbergh
Production: Steven Soderbergh
 Storyline: Like J. P. Marquis' *Valuables*, this film has got the top 100 grosses in the U.S. plus the year's #1 independent comedy.

TEARAWAYS THE EQUILIBRIUM SWING

Director: Troy How
Writer: Troy How
Photography: Troy How
Music: Troy How
Production: Troy How
 Storyline: Troy and Troy's mom's efforts are the Equilibrium Show's best effort to keep the audience interested.

TELEVISION PRE-PRODUCTION

ACT OF BETRAYAL

Prod. company: ABC Family Studios
Prod. title: TVA 1992

Prod. company: ABC Family Studios
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Please help us keep this survey accurate. Please contact Bill at (303) 429-5571 with any errors or clarifications.

BRIAN JEFFREY presents our indispensable

FILM BUFF'S DIARY

JANUARY

1 1962 G.P. Astor (John Gielgud) distinguished studio cameraman of British cinema (See *Steve Franco* 1946; *Dimbola* 1952) born London near Teddington, Italy

2 1964 NSW Government opens inquiry into life in industry with particular focus on the desirability of an Aus. labour quota

3 1966 The Seven Samurai (Akira Kurosawa's classic Hitchcockian sound stage at U.S. western studios only months before the director's death)

4 1968 Claude Bruckman art director closely associated with Walter Reisch (*The General* 1927) passes in Hollywood cemetery

5 1962 Warner Brothers studio announces it will film *Cassanova* — with Roddy McDowall, Alan Alda and Dennis Morgan in the lead roles

6 1964 Charles Chauvel's *The Stock Of Moomba* premieres Majestic Theatre, Melbourne

7 1965 Harry Sandling Jr. director of photography (*McCabe & Mrs. Miller* 1971; *Ultimate War* 1975) born Yorkville, NY

8 1961 Bette Fury McQueen (Thelma McCandless), much beloved memphitee as Flissy in *Gone With The Wind* born Tampa, Florida

9 1966 Julian John Colbeck dies at heart failure, Los Angeles

10 1968 Anton Wieden, son of director Count Harry Lorne Ferster for *No, Dear!* Menzies Vienna

11 1928 Actor Red Taylor born Rychnov

12 1950 MGM releases *Dinner At Eight* starring Marlene Dietrich, John Barrymore, Jean Harlow and Wallace Beery

13 1968 Albert Lennard, director (*Ma, She Beloved* 1958) born Paris

14 1964 Coal Miner, soon world costume designer (See 1968; *My Fair Lady* 1964) born London

15 1962 Rex Ingram, director (*The Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse* 1921; *The Garden Of Allah* 1927) born Dublin

16 1963 Frank Hurley (documentarian, documentary maker (*Ships And Seagulls*, 1921) and cinematographer (*The Silence Of The Lambs* 1994) dies, Sydney

FEBRUARY

1 1960 Mack Sennett (Michael Sennett), producer/director who made the early films of Chaplin, Keaton, Langdon and Arbuckle and created the Keystone Kops, born Richmond, Canada

2 1933 John Germinal, director (*Debutante* 1932; *The Bachelor* 1936; *Angie And Mary* 1937) born Singapore, England

3 1943 Michael Crawford (Michael Dumbell-Green) born, London, England

4 1967 Max Busch actress in *Keystone Kops* first star of Von Stroheim's *Foolish Wives* (1922), and a regular in Laurel and Hardy comedies from 1930, born Melbourne, Australia

5 1968 Georges Melies, pioneer director who made some 380 films (Up Top To The Moon) 1902) dies, Paris

6 1927 Harold Lloyd's *The Kid* (shorter released)

7 1929 Brighton Zoo in south east England announces the death from old age of Bill the lioness used to portray her famous counterpart, in *Born Free* (1966)

8 1976 Larry Fine, one of the original Three Stooges, dies from the effects of a stroke, Los Angeles

9 1979 Eiji Tsuburaya Japanese special effects technician and creator of *Godzilla* dies, Japan

10 1913 James Van Hise (Howard Chaikin (Metropac) composer who scored such classics as the *Creepy Hopho Road* series, *The Story Of Sir Henry I.* (1942) and *Two Rough Modern Miles* (1967) born Syracuse, New York

11 1929 John Bowes art director (*Portrait Of A Lady* 1953; *Smiles Of Living* 1955; *Queen* 1958) born London

12 1968 Paul Muni, composer for *Victor And God* (Cleopatra, 1963; *Concentric Circles* 1965; *Queen* 1968) born Istanbul

13 1969 Priddy Chayefsky (Sergeant Chayefsky), screenwriter (*Marty* 1955; *Explorers*, 1965) born The Bronx, NY

14 1944 Alan Parker, director (*Midnight Express* 1978; *Fame* 1980; *Rocky* 1976) born Islington, London

15 1968 Georges Arno prolific comic strip artist whose work can be found in many films (*Coco Loco's Coffey* 1967; *Crash In The Louvre* 1968; *Hill Mob* 1964; *Highway 6*; *Master Roger* 1967; *Prisoner's Revolt* (Tajpan) 1967) born Lodève, France

16 1944 Ghanshyam Govind Phale, a founder of the Indian cinema (*Naach* 1912) dies respected and a peasant, Bombay

17 1907 Harry Lester Crisbie (Garrison Ladies' Casino) Olympic gold medal winner who later played Texan an outlaw but is perhaps best remembered as Flash Gordon in the 1936 serial *Serial*, California

18 1964 Actor Matt Cavan born New Rochelle, New York

19 1967 Paul Terry, semi-mythical founder of Terrytoons Studios whose stable of characters includes Mighty Mouse and He-Man and She-Ra, born San Mateo, California

20 1968 First film sponsored ticket is paying audience in Japan, a Rogers Street Polytechnic, London

21 1968 Otto Garbo's first American film, *The Tenant* screened in New York by MFAA

22 1969 Ken O. Hall director (*The Search Of Dag* 1969; *Ted, Tedster* 1987; *Give To Dan Dogo* 1990) born Sydney

23 1964 Dino Pizzi, legendary Uncle in *Beach* who made annual pilgrimages to Rudolf Valentino's grave to leave a single red rose, dies San Jacinto, California

24 1969 Michael Mass (Mary McCormick) evocative as Ma in *Ma And Pa Kettle* born Atlanta, Georgia

25 1969 Keiko Miyagawa director of photography (*Madwoman* 1969; *Portrait* 1970) born Kyoto, Japan

26 1968 Louis Feuerbach painter/director of French cinema (*Les Vacances* 1911-16) dies Nica

27 1968 Elizabeth Taylor born, London

28 1966 Peter Fonda, director/producer/PGC/Pete Smith Specialties (*The Passing Parade* and other shorts) born New York City

29 1968 William Augustus (Massachusetts Senator (*Wings* 1937; *The Daughters Located* 1943; *The High And The Mighty* 1954) born Brookline, Massachusetts

Your Fine Work isn't Complete
until the Lab has Done its Job Well.



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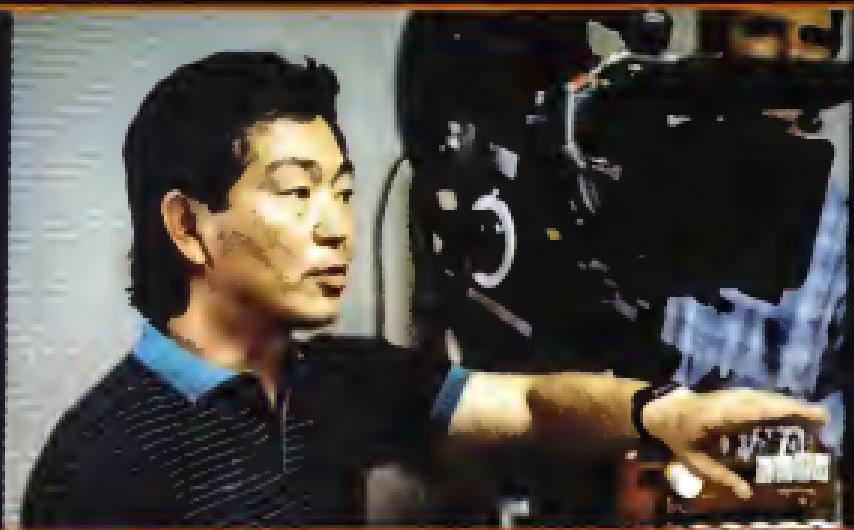
When it's all said, shot and done, your footage deserves to be processed by a laboratory that recognizes the talent, skill and hard work in each shot; a laboratory that regards your film as more than just a roll of emulsion, more likely, exposed emotions.

abl
australia.

We Understand.

Television Centre, Epping, N.S.W. 2121 Telephone (02) 858 7500 Facsimile (02) 858 7888 Telex 8470817

"I must know that what I see in front of the camera
is what I'll get on the screen."



HIRO NARITA,
Cinematographer, *America*.

"The filming of *America* involved a broad spectrum of photographic practices and challenges ranging from the cold, raw landscapes of McMurdo base, the huge static interiors of such sites as the House of Representatives, to the violent tides of a crowded nightshift. Each demanded a unique visual atmosphere to enhance the story. AGFA XT 320's wide latitude helped me achieve that.

I was able to use bold, angular lighting without sacrificing shadow detail or image sharpness. Night scenes, which were demanded by a good portion of the film, were suspended.

The negative truly rewarded me for its capacity to hold detail while colonizing such presents of extreme brightness as passing headlights or explosions.

As a Director of Photography "I must know that what I see in front of the camera is what I'll get on the screen." AGFA XT 320 with its improved color reproduction and sharpness assured me of that. I counted on XT 320 and all of the 1,200,000 feet I exposed delivered consistently day shooting and also night."

AMERICA is a CAPITAL CITIZENSHIP, INC. - ABC NETWORK DIVISION ENTERTAINMENT presentation of an ABC CIRCLE FILMS production. Directed and executive produced by DONALD WESTR.

AGFA XT 125 & XT 320: They reflect the best of you.

AGFA